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WOMEN, LEISURE AND A HINTERLAND COMMUNITY

BY

PATRICIA LEAH HUNTER

A THESIS

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in

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to people everywhere who believe that it is possible to create a better world... a world in which all persons, regardless of gender, are encouraged to believe in themselves and to help others to do so as well.

ABSTRACT

Often defined in three ways, as freedom from obligation, an activity, or a time, the term leisure is used in many confusing and contradictory ways. It is increasingly confusing as it is more representative of the upper-middle class, white male urban-dweller than of any other group in society. Little information on women and leisure has been collected and analysed. The information in this thesis brings the concept of leisure into a discussion of women and hinterland community, its purpose being threefold; firstly, to examine women's lives to better understand what their life experiences are, secondly, to give them the opportunity to explore and express their thoughts and feelings on concepts of leisure in language that means something to them and expresses the realities of their lives, and thirdly, to empower them by situating them in their particular social context and by having them name, and claim, their own experiences for themselves. This thesis represents a feminist critique of a traditionally androcentric term, that of leisure, in a community where many forms of patriarchal oppression exist. Upon conducting content analysis of semi-structured interviews and participant observation at local organisations, three broad thematic areas emerged; that of familial and friendship relations, community relations, and leisure. When the study participants were asked to speak about leisure, it became evident that they

spoke in two voices. In the first voice, it was described in relation to the traditional male concepts of leisure. Interviewees would, however, add that although this was what leisure was, they never experienced it. When prompted to talk more about the subject, the same women spoke of a complex interweaving of various parts of their lives, their happiness and of striking a balance between self and other centredness. This is the second voice. Leisure then becomes more about the development of self and other centredness in balance than about time, activity or freedom from obligation to others. The results of this study point to a need for a re-definition of the concept of leisure and a deeper analysis of the concepts, both practical and theoretical, which shape our world and our lives. Suggestions for transforming and overcoming various forms of patriarchal oppression in the community, which were exposed in the research process, are also put forth.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

1. INTRODUCTION: WOMEN AND LEISURE....1

2. REVIEW OF SUBSTANTIVE LITERATURE: WOMEN AND LEISURE....9

2.1 Dominant Meanings of 'Leisure'....9

2.2 The Androcentrism of Leisure....14

2.3 Androcentrism in Leisure Research....16

2.4 Research Perspectives and the Study of Women and Leisure....18

2.5 Selected Feminist-Informed Leisure Research....20

2.6 Towards Change: Not Just Leisure 'For Women', But Leisure 'By' Women....31

3. REVIEW OF METHODOLOGICAL LITERATURE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, FEMINIST RESEARCH....36

3.1 Review....36

3.1.1 Research Methodology: The Interpretive Paradigm....36

3.1.2 Qualitative Methods....39

3.1.3 Feminist Contributions to Qualitative Methods....45

3.2 Proposed Study: Women, Leisure and Community....50

3.3 Conclusion....52

4. SPECIFIC STUDY METHODS....54

4.1 The Hypothesis....54

4.2 The Setting....55

4.2.1 Brief Description of the Locality....55

4.2.2 Definition of Hinterland Communities..56

.4.3 Specific Data Collection Techniques.....59

4.3.1 Observation.....59

4.3.2 Participant Observation.....60

4.3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews.....65

4.3.4 Unstructured Interviews.....71

4.3.5 Document Analysis.....71

4.4 Data Analysis.....72

4.4.1 Organising Collected Data.....74

4.4.2 Saturating Statements.....74

4.4.3 The Emerging Themes.....75

4.4.4 Creating a Dialectic Between Statements and Theory.....76

5. KINSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP RELATIONS.....77

5.1 The Results of Data Analysis.....77

5.2 Kinship Relations.....77

5.3 'The Family'.....78

5.3.1 The Ideology of Familism.....78

5.3.2 Separate Realities.....82

5.3.3 Motherhood as Work.....91

5.3.4 Space and Physical Mobility.....100

5.4 Friendship Relations.....106

5.4.1 The Importance of Strong Relationships.....107

5.4.2 Different Circles.....109

5.4.3 The Women's Centre: Finding Friends and Breaking Boundaries.....111

5.5 Conclusion.....116

6. COMMUNITY RELATIONS.....117

6.1 Where We Live is Fundamental to How We Live.....117

6.2 Community Services.....121

6.2.1 Poor Job Opportunities.....121

6.2.2 Volunteerism.....124

6.2.3 Poor Transportation Services.....126

6.2.4 Poor Community Services for Women.....129

6.2.5 Desire for a Safe Place.....130

6.2.6 Expressed Need For Services for Women.....131

6.3 Social Division.....134

6.3.1 Power and Authority.....134

6.3.2 Cliques.....136

6.3.3 Class Divisions.....137

6.4 Discussion.....139

7. 'LEISURE' AND 'RELATIONALITY'.....146

7.1 A Re-Definition of Leisure.....146

7.2 The First Voice: Androcentrism and Women's Leisure.....148

7.2.1 'Leisure is Unobligated Time...'.....148

7.2.2 If There is Little Sense of Well-Being Then There is No Sense of Leisure.....152

7.2.3 Little Sense of Self and/or Relationality Leads to Little Sense of Leisure.....154

7.3 The Second Voice: Women Name Their Experience of Leisure.....155

7.3.1 Leisure and Relationality.....155

7.3.2 Leisure is a Combination of an Increased Sense of Self and Relationality.....158

7.3.3 'Leisure is a Chance To Do Something for Me...'.....160

7.4 Discussion.....168

8. THEMATIC INTER-RELATIONSHIPS: THE STRENGTH OF PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION.....171

8.1 Introduction.....171

8.2 The Forms of Patriarchal Oppression.....173

8.2.1 Physical Isolation Through Social Design.....174
i. Single Family Dwellings.....174
ii. Vast Size and Harsh Climate.....177
iii. The Absence of Public Transportation.....178
iv. Centralized Shopping Facilities...179

8.3 Labour Market Organisation.....181

8.3.1 Poor Job Opportunities for Women.....181

8.3.2 Male Authority -Labour.....182

8.4 Stereotypical Oppression.....184

8.4.1 Women's Acceptance of Stereotypes.....185

8.4.2 Women For Change Fighting the Criticism of Other Women.....187

8.4.3 The Difficulties in Challenging The Stereotypes.....190

8.5 Social Isolation -Physical Violence.....192

8.5.1 Physical Violence.....193

8.5.2 Blaming the Victim.....193

8.6 The Strength of Patriarchal Organisations and the Relative Weakness of Others.....196

8.6.1 The Power of Patriarchal Organisations.....196

8.6.2 The Marginality of The Women's Centre.....197

9. OVERCOMING PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION.....204

9.1 Theory and Practice.....204

9.2 Transforming the Theoretical.....207

9.2.1 Infusing Feminist Beliefs in an Integrated Sociological Perspective on Leisure.....207

9.2.2 Power and Self-Determination.....209

9.2.3 Exploring Our Differences.....211

9.3 Transforming The Practical.....212

9.3.1 Coming Together.....212

9.3.2 The Women's Centre.....214

9.3.3 Empowerment -Personal and Collective..215

9.4 Overcoming Patriarchy 221

9.4.1 Overcoming Physical Isolation.....221

9.4.2 Gaining Access to Better Jobs.....222

9.4.3 Breaking Down Stereotypical Views of Women.....223

9.4.4 Confronting Social Isolation.....224

9.4.5 Promoting Feminist Collectivism.....225

9.5 Conclusion.....226

REFERENCES.....229

CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTION: WOMEN AND LEISURE

Leisure is a term that is explored in this study on women, leisure and a hinterland community. It is, however, a highly misleading term in the literature. Generally defined in three ways, as an activity, a time, or a state of mind, it is used in many confusing and contradictory ways. 'Leisure' is used to describe going for a 'leisurely' or easy stroll, our 'leisure time' in after-work hours, unemployment and retirement, the 'leisure class' and their conspicuous lifestyle, places such as 'leisure centres' where leisure is supposed to occur, and available goods and services in capitalist society such as 'leisure' suits, shoes, pillows, magazines, vehicles, and holidays. The concept of leisure is increasingly confusing as it is more representative of the upper-middle class, white male urban-dweller than of any other group in society. Little quantitative or qualitative information on women and leisure has been collected and analysed; especially on women who happen to be residents of hinterland communities. This study attempts to bring the concept of leisure into a discussion of women and hinterland community.

The main purpose of this study is to give women residents of a hinterland community the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings on concepts of leisure in language that means something to them and expresses the realities of their lives. Although the study of women and leisure has only recently been given attention, the intention of this study is to add to studies done by Bella (1986,1987, 1988) on androcentrism

in the sociology of leisure. In these studies, Bella concludes that...

> "The concept of leisure, both historically and as used by many of today's leisure researchers, is androcentric. The concept has little meaning for those not living within the time bounds of employment, or for those parts of our lives whose meaning is in our relationships with and responsibilities for others. The concept of leisure has been developed by men as they reflected on their own restricted lives and experiences. Much of the language in leisure literature is also sexist, reinforcing assumptions that men's lives are the norm and women's lives are to be measured by that norm. As a result leisure research has failed to understand women's lives and those parts of men's lives concerned with relationship and dependence."(Bella, 1986: 2)

Bella suggests that in order to redress the balance in leisure research and in our understandings of the concepts of leisure, women should regain their life experiences by using words other than 'leisure', in order to be more appropriate in describing their lives. The author argues that if researchers were to go out and ask women to coin new words to describe these aspects of their lives, the new words would be concerned with relationships. The author uses the term 'relationality' to refer to the multi-layered nature of relationships, and the way that they are built through activities. 'Relationality' is the entity that is germane to women's lives, argues Bella (1988); starting from this perspective would lead...

> "...to a better understanding of the meanings of people's lives than the dichotomy of work and leisure. The meaning of the activity is in one's relationship to those with whom one is doing the activity. The meaning lies not in the activity itself - whether it is washing dishes, playing squash, or reading aloud - but in the context of relationship and responsibility. Similarly, the principle of 'relationality' leads women to place high value on obligation to others. Leisure as

> 'freedom from obligation' has no value to one who values relationships with others as supremely important." (p. 18)

In other areas of the social sciences, feminist critiques of androcentric terms, concepts and theories have recently begun. In the area of the sociology of sport, feminist work has begun on the transformation of traditionally male concepts towards feminist ideals. Birrell and Richter (1987), for example, have investigated how women who define themselves as feminists actively create and sustain preferences which challenge the male preserve of sport. In the study, the authors sought out women who defined themselves as feminists and who were involved in the sport of softball in two neighbouring communities in the United States. Their analysis is based upon data collected through interviews and observations of these women over a four year period. The accounts indicate that traditional forms of sport are made up of social practices which are in opposition to their feminist values. For example, most team sports are formed to adhere to strict chains of command or hierarchical relations. The women participants challenged the sport of softball in many ways, one of which was the area of coaching...

> "One player voiced the concerns of many when she said... 'I don't know if coaching is on the edge of an abuse of power... A coach would have to be pretty sensitive to not abuse it, because it is a lot of power.'... Some teams tried [a] system [of] collective management. On one such team, interested players took turns managing a game... The purpose of this system of rotating coach was to share power and responsibility and to avoid creating a structure in which one person made all the decisions." (p. 403-404)

The paper then documents one example of a process of cultural resistance to rituals of masculine hegemony. The authors conclude that... "Neither sport nor society, as presently constituted, serves women's needs particularly well. As one of the softball players observed: 'If you think about it, there is a contradiction between feminism and sport. But when you think about it, there's a contradiction between feminism and life in America, but you keep doing it.'" (p. 408)

In this study on women and leisure in a hinterland community, it is hypothesized that the term 'leisure' typically refers to meanings and practices that are not representative of women's life experiences. The purpose of this study is to examine women's lives to better understand what their life experiences are in a hinterland community, to give them the opportunity to explore their lives and situate them in the social context of such a community, and to empower them by having them name their own experiences. Finally, possibilities for strengthening forms of women's culture which exist in the community, and are informed by feminism, will be outlined. In effect, the aim of this study is to build upon the scant beginnings of a feminist transformation of leisure for women of a hinterland community.

In order to meet the aims of this study, I have dealt with the problem in a series of nine chapters, including this introductory one. Chapter two is a substantive review of the literature on women and leisure. In this chapter, a strong case is made for the importance of a feminist analysis of leisure

through a critique of orthodox work in the area and a review of selected feminist texts which address pertinent issues (eg. divisions of labour, caring work, relationality, as well as 'leisure' itself).

Chapter three is a review of the methodological literature; its purpose is to develop an argument to support an appropriate research strategy to deal with the problems surrounding women and leisure in a community setting. In the first section, research paradigms, qualitative methods and the feminist contributions to them, are discussed. In the second section, selected articles on the study of women, leisure and community settings is presented.

Chapter four is a review of the specific study methods on women, leisure and a hinterland community. The material presented in this chapter is taken from data collected for an exploratory study on women and leisure in a hinterland community. Methods of data collection follow the techniques outlined in Bogdan and Taylor (1975). They are: participant observation as a local college employee and as a member of the Cranbrook Women's Resource Society, semi-structured interviews with twenty-one women residents, and unstructured interviews with approximately thirty women residents. Finally, some document analysis of related organisations and newspapers is done. The chapter is divided into four sections dealing with the hypothesis, the setting, specific data collection techniques and data analysis.

Chapter five is a presentation of the interview and

observation findings. Upon conducting content analysis of twenty-one semi-structured interviews and the participant observation at the College, and the Women's Centre, three broad thematic areas emerged. These areas are familial and friendship relations, community relations and leisure. Although it is evident that these themes have some points which emphasize their separateness, they are all closely related. The data presented in this chapter reports some of the findings under the first broad thematic area of friendship and familial relations. (Each of these two areas are discussed within the same 'theme', as they both involve the relational aspects of the women's lives and each has a profound effect on the other.) The material dealing with familial relations is organised into four areas. These are firstly, the strength of ideological notions of familism, secondly, the existence of separate realities for people based upon gender, thirdly, the work that is required of mothers within the family, and fourthly, the effects of transiency and physical mobility in the study participants' lives. The material dealing with friendship relations has been organised into three areas. These areas concern statements about the high degree of importance placed on good relationships, the existence of different circles of affiliation in the community, and the value of the local women's centre in facilitating friendships.

Chapter six is a presentation of the second theme to be developed from the analysis of the data collected. It deals with aspects of community. Although some positive comments

about the physical beauty and high degree of safety in the Cranbrook area are made, the majority of comments of the women participants in this study reflect a dissatisfaction with certain aspects of community life. These aspects are grouped into two areas, those pertaining to community services and social isolation.

Chapter seven is a presentation of the last theme to be developed from the analysis of the collected data. It deals with women naming their own experiences of leisure. When the women study participants were asked to speak about leisure, it became evident that they spoke in two voices. Initially, it was almost always in relation to the traditional male concepts of leisure as non-work time, as freedom from obligation, and as a particular activity. They would then add that, although this was what leisure was, they never experienced it. This is the first voice. When prompted to talk more about other things in their lives which made them happy, without using the label of leisure, the same women spoke of a complex interweaving of various parts of their lives and their happiness. This is the second voice. Leisure then becomes something quite different from what our traditional concepts say it is.

Chapter eight represents a discussion of the relationships between the three previously discussed themes. The links and common factors in the pieces of women's dialogues lie in the social forces of patriarchal oppression, which so profoundly shapes their lives. Specifically, it was found that patriarchal oppression manifests itself in a number of forms. The social

and physical organisation of society and the community, the stereotypical views of women, and the strong presence of androcentric concepts to explain and represent their lives all contain elements of patriarchal oppression. All of these forms affect women in Cranbrook and are therefore analysed in this chapter.

Chapter nine deals with making not only conclusions as to the findings of this study, but also suggestions as to transforming and overcoming patriarchal oppression in the community in order that the quality of life of its women residents be fostered. This last chapter is then divided into four main sections. The first section deals with the importance of drawing links between the practical and theoretical experiences of women. The second section, on transforming the theoretical, contains sub-sections on infusing feminist beliefs in an integrated sociological perspective on leisure, power and self-determination, and on exploring our differences as women. The third section, on transforming the practical, contains sub-sections on the importance of collectivity, the Women's Centre, and empowerment- both personal and collective. The final section, on overcoming patriarchy in Cranbrook, presents recommendations for alleviating patriarchal oppression in various general areas of women's lives.

CHAPTER 2.
REVIEW OF SUBSTANTIVE LITERATURE: WOMEN AND LEISURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review the substantive literature on women and leisure. First, dominant meanings of 'leisure' will be critiqued for their failure to adequately represent women's lives. Second, selected articles on women and leisure will be discussed in order that we might better understand this highly confusing and often contradictory area. Next, selected studies will be presented which are more successful at representing women's lives and leisure.

2.1 DOMINANT MEANINGS OF 'LEISURE'

Clarke and Critcher (1985), state that... "Women have less leisure time, participate less in most leisure activities and draw on a narrower range of leisure options than men. They also spend most of their leisure in and around home and family." (p. 159) The authors go on to argue that these differences in patterns of leisure point to the need for a qualitatively and quantitatively different women's model of leisure rather than a constrained version of male leisure.

For women, having young children constrains their access both to leisure and paid employment. The kind of leisure that is available to young mothers is often simply an extension of their domestic responsibilities (Bella, 1987, Luxton, 1981, Deem, 1986). Such activities as sewing, knitting and crocheting may be seen as enjoyable in themselves; however they also contribute to the household income or at the very least, lessen

household expenditures. Therefore the boundaries between work and leisure are historically less clear than has typically been the case for men; conversely many activities often called 'leisure' may take on distinctly practical (if not obligatory) overtones. Watching television or listening to the radio may be done simultaneously with domestic work such as cleaning and cooking, and caring for others. Unlike paid employment, domestic responsibilities do not have a fixed schedule. Domestic work is timeless, it broadens and constricts to suit the needs and desires of members of the household. This situation leaves women in a position of being permanently on call.

Leisure can be seen as reflecting the social divisions of the larger society. It not only reflects these divisions, however, it actualizes them, by being one of the profound forces by which social divisions receive delineation and legitimisation. This relationship...

> "between leisure and social divisions is particularly evident in the case of gender. The quantitative and qualitative differences between male and female are first an extension of the sexual division of labour within society as a whole. They are also secondly ways in which the dominant definitions of what it means to be male or female are enforced and confirmed. Leisure celebrates gender differences." (Clarke and Critcher, 1985:161)

For example, sport, often considered to be a form of leisure, has been described as a site for cultural struggle between masculinity and femininity. Describing the elements of cultural struggle in the sporting realm, Hargreaves (1986)

states...

> "Sporting masculinity is taken for granted- the sportsman is the symbolic focus of male power and when women are involved, either as participants, spectators, coaches or helpers, their experiences tend to be submerged with those of men... The strength and aggression required in macho sports like Australian-rules football, American football, rugby and ice-hockey render men, by implication, fit also for work and battle. The appropriate discourse for the practice of power invested in the male sporting body in these contexts is a military discourse of war and combat- of struggles, confrontations, strategies and tactics. By contrast, 'feminine appropriate' sports like gymnastics, ice-skating and synchronized swimming, which emphasize balance, co-ordination, flexibility and grace, idealize popular images of femininity. In addition, women are involved in non-performance or subordinate and traditionally female roles as members of supporter's clubs, cheerleaders, tea ladies and ticket collectors." (p. 116)

Women's sport has been restricted to a separate and a conditional sphere and traditional sporting models, then, support stereotypical masculine and feminine ways of being by reinforcing the idea that the present gendered division of labour and leisure is 'natural'. The most acceptable sporting activities for women, then, are those that support femininity, those that require grace, finesse and poise such as gymnastics, figure skating and aerobics. Often, women who do compete in the more strenuous sports which require body contact or much aggressiveness are subjected to lengthy commentator's discussions which reassure the spectator that indeed the woman does have a boyfriend, and is planning on settling down and having children. Her femininity is then validated (Kidd, 1987, Hargreaves, 1984). Sport then, a specific area of leisure,

remains an area where masculinity and femininity are defined and confirmed, and where physical differences are changed into cultural statements of the stronger and the weaker, ensuring that men are validated as important and that women's participation is compared to the masculine norm.

It would appear then, that our leisure pursuits are not freely chosen, but are instead profoundly affected by the surrounding social structure. Mills (1959) has stated that... "Freedom is not merely the chance to do as one pleases; neither is it merely the opportunity to choose between set alternatives. Freedom is, first of all, the chance to formulate the available choices, to argue over them- and then, the opportunity to choose." (p. 193) The 'sociological imagination' is defined as an ability to situate human activity within the social structure without simplifying its complexity or constraining its meaning. The leisure of individuals needs then to be understood in relation to the patterns of the larger society. Private leisure patterns are publicly validated through class, race, age and gender. Family leisure must be related to the location of the family in the social structure and the leisure of individual family members to their place in the structure of the family. It is evident that, especially in terms of women's experiences, what has been previously defined as leisure choice does not meet Mills' definition of freedom.

Deem (1982) concludes,

> "...it appears that women's exploitation and subordination are so deeply entrenched at every level of our society that most women have little choice about their leisure patterns and 'space'

> for leisure, and are placed in a situation where they have to develop cultures and values which enable them to make sense of their own lives, despite the oppression and exploitation which they face." (p. 45)

Calling for a more integrated treatment of leisure in the lives of women and one which also celebrates the collective achievement of women in gaining more access to leisure, Wearing et al. (1988) suggest that

> "...such leisure as freely chosen experience is dependent upon the power relationships at both macro- and micro-levels of the society in which it is experienced. It involves the ideas of both freedom and also constraint characteristics of its Latin root, 'licere', so that women's leisure is viewed from a much more positive angle." (p. 117)

The authors examine how the power relations of industrialism, capitalism and patriarchy have had a constraining effect upon leisure as defined as freedom of choice, or as anticipated intrinsic values such as self-expression, self-enhancement and enjoyment. Women, in an industrialist-capitalist system, have largely been responsible for the reproductive sphere, while men function for the most part in the productive sphere. Women's freedom to experience leisure is constrained by the power relationships of the capitalist mode of production and its ideological outcomes. The authors then state..."Top down power oppresses women, limits their autonomy and ensures unequal class and gender access to leisure... In this view under industrial-capitalism, there appears to be little escape for women, little opportunity for freely chosen leisure experience." (p.119)

Male power and privilege is enabled as all societal institutions are male dominated. Women's domestic labour frees men to pursue paid employment, enhancing their self-esteem and their access to power through participation in community and sport. By their very gender, men have the power to ensure that their ideas become the norm, that masculinity becomes culture and that femininity becomes conditional to that culture (Hall, 1987). Men have more access to leisure time, leisure activities and leisure resources. Leisure then... "serves the interests of men and is serviced by the labour of women." (Wearing et al.p. 119)

2.2 THE ANDROCENTRISM OF LEISURE

Bella (1986, 1987, 1988) comments on the androcentrism of scholarship in general, and discusses specific aspects of the androcentrism of 'leisure'. The author states three examples in particular of 'malestream' thought on present leisure concepts. A common illustration of the androcentrism of leisure is the use of masculine language to encompass both male and female lives. Although researchers occasionally refer to both sexes when they use the 'generic he', the outcome is a disposition that disregards variations between the sexes, sets a definition of leisure with reference to the experience of males and contributes to a view of women's experience as 'different' and 'inferior' rather than legitimized as normal. To be male is to be normal. To be female is to be different from male, different from the norm, and therefore, an exception.

Another aspect of the androcentrism of leisure according to

Bella, is that it is constructed on a mutually exclusive dichotomy between work and leisure. The work/leisure dichotomy was relevant for men who worked in industry and therefore in the 'public' domain, and experienced leisure in the 'private' sphere of the family. However, the social construction of this dichotomy has lead to the creation of artificial boundaries. In reality, the two entities are inextricably bound and strongly interdependent. The construction of dichotomies such as the work/leisure and the public/private ones become sexist in that they produce an expectation that people perform social roles on the basis of their sex. Hall (1987) has critiqued the literature on 'sex role' on four bases. Firstly, the notion of sex role is socially illogical in that we do not attempt to explain differential behaviour patterns on the bases of race, age or class 'roles'. Secondly, it focuses attention on individuals, rather than on social structure and it depoliticises the central question of power and control in explaining gender inequality. Thirdly, it is used as if it exists concretely rather than being a social construct. The 'defined situation' then reifies itself. Lastly, role terminology is not fully applicable to gender because it infuses the more specific roles one plays such as mother, father, teacher, friend and so on. The work/leisure dichotomy that has been used to explain and to analyse leisure is overly simplistic and neglects to acknowledge the existence of power, of masculine hegemony and of the profound interdependencies of the public and private spheres (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1987).

A third aspect of androcentrism in leisure concepts is that of 'freedom from obligation'. This notion suggests that persons who are not free from obligations to dependent others can not experience leisure. Many people have obligations to others; however, women, who often have the primary responsibility for being the caretaker for husbands and children, can feel constant obligation to others. A concept of leisure which is based on the existence of 'freedom from obligation' can not be used to understand the lives of those who have obligations for others or those who are largely dependent upon others. Due to the restrictions of dependence and the limitations associated with obligations, leisure as 'freedom from obligation' is rendered impossible.

2.3 ANDROCENTRISM IN LEISURE RESEARCH

The androcentric bias embodied in concepts of leisure carries forward in the choice of research subjects and methodology. The idea of leisure as either time or activities distinguishable from paid work constructs studies of 'leisure activities' and/or 'leisure time'. Since positivist social science requires that leisure be visible and measurable, leisure studies have tended to focus on activities and on the instrumental rather than the expressive parts of life (Bella, 1986. Activities are relatively easy to measure; hence there are many empirical studies, and a detached and fragmented view of the way in which people lead their lives.

One technique that has contributed to the one-dimensional representation of people's lived experiences in leisure research

is that of the time-budget study. Time budget analysis has been conducted in leisure studies of the past (DeGrazia, 1962; Roberts, 1978). Shaw (1987) attempted to expand time budget analysis by having respondents label their activities as 'leisure', 'work' or 'neither'. The author confirmed findings of women's comparative lack of leisure. However Shaw could not get to the next stage of understanding what leisure meant to respondents because the study was constrained by the insensitivity of the time budget's work/leisure duality. Time budget studies tend to have "...stripped activities of their context, analysing what is done and for how long, rather than looking at the meaning of those activities in the context of an entire life and the relationships it entails" (Bella, 1986:29). The methods used in time budget analysis disregard the relational dimensions of people's lives that have dominated women's lived experiences.

A second problem that has compounded the sexism in leisure research is the tendency to treat women's leisure in the context of the family. Many leisure researchers have described leisure as contributing to family stability (Witt and Goodale, 1982), and some have indicated the importance of leisure participation for family cohesion and marital satisfaction (Crawford and Godbey, 1987). However, this research is familist as it assumes that the family is a one-dimensional group, that it is a two-parent unit, and that leisure is experienced homogeneously within it.

Clarke and Critcher (1985) examine the development of the

sociology of leisure through an analysis of various texts, some of which are familist in nature. One of the texts which they consider to have given the problems and experiences of women equal attention to that of men, and which they consider to be a considerable advance over earlier works, is that of Rapoport and Rapoport's (1975) examination of leisure and the life cycle. Clarke and Critcher state that...

> "In their discussion of parts of the life cycle, immediately before and after marriage or at the point that children leave home, there is an explicit recognition that existing stereotypes of sex roles within the family demand excessively damaging sacrifices for women. If the role of gender remains largely untheorised and never achieves more than the status of a variable within the life cycle, women are present in this book in a way rarely found in the sociology of leisure." (p. 33)

The point, even with respect to relatively sensitive analyses, is that 'family leisure' does not exist for all members of the family equally. Studies that are familist in nature do not uncover the work required by certain family members to organize leisure and to make it possible for other family members. In further reviewing the literature on women and leisure, it is useful to examine some specific approaches that have been used to deal with the area.

2.4 RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES AND THE STUDY OF WOMEN AND LEISURE

Clarke and Critcher (1985) criticise researchers who had previously attempted to contribute to the development of the sociology of leisure, citing two general faults... "On the one hand there is a withdrawal from the attempt to grasp leisure as a social process which was implicit in studies using the

concepts of class culture and community. On the other, there is a withdrawal from any attempt to grasp the positioning of leisure within an overall social structure." (p. 44) The authors believe that the units used to measure modern life are work, the family and leisure, thus shrinking our vision of the world and stripping the totality of economic, social, political and ideological processes from the analysis. A discussion of how power, services, cultural resources and identities are socially produced, reproduced and distributed unequally is lost from view. As well the authors argue that just as any understanding of the social structure is hidden, so too is a discussion of the importance of culture and the making of society. The authors state that...

> "This process of cultural creation- the meaning with which people invest their actions- is also absent from this sociological consensus. Instead, we are offered leisure as a reflex of work (Parker); leisure as a spin-off from middle class life styles (Young and Wilmott); leisure as an aspect of psychological maturation (the Rapoports); and finally, leisure as the embodiment of pluralist diversity (Roberts). Agency- the active creation of patterns of behaviour and meaning- is left to reside only in the individual, exercising consumer choice. There is no sense of social agency within leisure; and no sense that the processes which impinge upon leisure in these accounts (work, the family, the life cycle, the market) are themselves social processes, requiring human agency to reproduce or change them." (p.45)

Clarke and Critcher argue, then, that work, the family, the life cycle, and the market are social processes which are open to struggle and change.

The authors also attempt to incorporate an analysis of gender into their discussion of leisure. They propose what they

term a gendered division of leisure, stating that...

> "The qualitative and quantitative inferiority of women's leisure sharpens with the entry into the roles of wife and mother. Leisure has to be sacrificed in order to carry out these roles within existing social arrangements. Far from being the way in which women realise their leisure potential, the family curtails their leisure opportunities. The expanding involvement of the family unit in creating leisure often depends on the hidden labour of the woman. Family leisure is thus based on the same gender assumptions which find expression through it." (p. 225)

The authors then uncover issues of gender which had been previously hidden or disregarded in discussions of leisure.

On the basis of the information which has been presented here, we could ponder what the implications are for women's access to leisure and whether leisure is an appropriate term for women at all. Further research and literature on women and leisure which begins from a feminist perspective will now be discussed. It again is successful at uncovering the nuances of women's lives and examines how these experiences and their connections to power and patriarchy exist.

2.5 SELECTED FEMINIST-INFORMED LEISURE RESEARCH

It is evident that little information on women and leisure has been collected and analysed in a manner which uncovers participants' full perspectives, and virtually no studies have been done on women and leisure for residents of hinterland communities. Some studies have looked at women's lives in specific communities. One such study was done on the small single-industry town of Flin Flon, Manitoba (Luxton, 1980). The study reports on the domestic labour of women in this town but

does not incorporate a concept of leisure into the discussion. A small number of other studies have examined the lives of women in hinterland communities. The National Film Board has produced two short documentary films on women's lives in company towns. In "No Life for a Woman"(1979B), the lives of women who are residents of a small Northern British Columbia resource-based community are examined. In "Boomer"(1979A), the life of one woman in particular is portrayed as she travels around to resource-based towns in Alberta where her husband is a transient labourer. The intent of the films is to describe the lives of these women, not so much to make a social statement as to how their lives could be improved. Concepts of leisure are not discussed in either film. Other research has provided an analysis of women's leisure in Britain (Deem, 1986).

Deem states that there is no one single feminist perspective; however feminist approaches do situate women as central to their arguments and view them as a subordinate population with certain shared experiences and ideas. Feminist perspectives consider relating theory and analysis to action and change as very important; something which none of the other approaches advocate. Research on leisure from a feminist perspective tends to emphasize the personal, and yet socially structured, nature of leisure, utilize ethnographic methods, advance an understanding of the significance of leisure for women, and include in the discussion an analysis of power, patriarchy or masculine hegemony (Shank, 1986; Barrett, 1980; Deem, 1982).

In a feminist-informed study, Deem (1982) dealt with the inequalities in gaining access to leisure space. The author stated that the same factors which contributed to women's overall dependent position in society also affected their access to leisure. The purpose of the study, conducted in Milton Keynes, a 'new town' in England, was to show how female's oppression may affect their leisure both quantitatively and qualitatively. Deem proposed that... "men as well as capital and state institutes may benefit from the subordinate role of women." (p. 32) In general, leisure time was unequally distributed between men and women; wives receiving far less than their husbands. In order to establish a more equitable balance, Deem suggested that we...

> "...examine carefully the cultural, ideological, political and economic contexts in which both women and leisure exist. Only thus may we understand why women do not always see leisure as something to which they legitimately have a right, and why some, whose lives make any sustained leisure activities or even just relaxation in peace and quiet very difficult, argue that their lives are not as hard as those of their husbands and that they have adequate leisure space-adequate, that is, for women." (p. 44)

Through a feminist perspective, researchers attempt not only to explain women's understanding of leisure as it relates to other aspects of individual and social entities, but to offer some suggestions as to how societal change might be achieved that would empower people or provide more people with more freedom to experience leisure in their lives.

Rubin (1976) examined the experiences of leisure of working class couples with children. The husbands, whose days were

spent at jobs that provided very few personal satisfactions, enjoyed reading, watching T.V., and playing with the children. Quite often, the men enjoyed 'do-it-yourself' projects such as working on cars or the house. They described their tasks, which often required a lot of work, time and money, as 'playing around'. Rubin suggests that because the men were working at jobs that required the suppression of creativity, any activity that allowed for imagination was experienced as play and not work.

For wives that worked out of the home, time after dinner was spent doing chores "...straightening up the house, washing, ironing, a little sewing, tomorrow's lunches, perhaps a casserole for dinner the next day- all done under the pressure of guilt because she's not yet had any time with the children" (p. 187). For those who spent the day at home, they often felt bored and restless- ready to get out of the house.

The woman has some leisure preferences based upon her situation:

> "I know he's tired and that he's got all those projects he likes to do. But still, sometimes I feel like I'll go crazy if we don't go some-place. It doesn't have to be anything fancy or something special. I know we can't afford to go out to eat or even go to the movies very much. But we could just go for a little ride sometimes and maybe stop in and see his sister or my folks for a little while." (p. 188)

The man has other leisure preferences based upon his life experience:

> "I've got things to do here, and if I don't feel like doing anything, I'm satisfied to relax and take it easy - you know, have a beer and watch T.V. I guess I don't need much excitement like she does." (p. 188)

The author believes that there is more to their differing needs than simply 'excitement'. They experience different realities in their day to day lives- she is isolated from contact with other adults; he is surrounded by adults at work. Thus he is content to return to the sanctity of the house while she is often desperate to leave it. Rubin stated that... "for him, the house is a haven; for her, a prison" (p. 188).

Rubin also suggests the existence of different realities; by describing... "differences that are rooted in the profoundly different ways in which women and men define themselves, and in the issues that preoccupy them when, as boys and girls, they struggle toward a definition of self that feels safe and comfortable" (p. 188). This statement parallels those of Baker-Miller's (1976) on learned 'ways of being' and are exemplified in leisure preferences.

Men, whose days provided little opportunity to express themselves in mastery and competence, sought these qualities in their leisure pursuits of fixing and building things with their hands. These after-work leisure activities enabled them... "to affirm their identity, their sense of self, and their sense of worth." (Rubin p. 189) Conversely the girls learned early in life that their primary area of expertise was to be an emotional and relational one and that they were to suppress mastery and competence in the world of objects and public work. It appeared then to be 'natural' that their favourite leisure pursuits as women were visiting friends, an activity that requires relational and emotional skills and which serves to support

their sense of competence, self-identity and self-worth.

Another study which is successful at uncovering the experiences of women is Bella's (1987) examination of the work that women do to produce and reproduce family leisure. Her paper reviews data from an exploratory study of the work women do to create leisure for the rest of the family, and of the meaning of that leisure to the women themselves. Bella focuses her study on the production of Christmas, a celebration which is generally expected to be joyful and family-oriented. She asserts that the meaning and significance of Christmas activities could most appropriately be viewed in terms of the relationships between people and of reproductive labor. In terms of relationality, all of the women who were interviewed for the study spoke of the meaning and significance of the Christmas activities to their families and themselves. All of the various rituals were seen as representing, reaffirming or reinforcing the ties between friends and family.

To many of the women, Christmas was wholly related to people and the positive relationships between them.

> "A 'real' Christmas is one with good happy relationships, an occasion. That would be the key- being together with people that you rally love, and having time to do that. Everybody is putting a little more effort into getting along with each other. They're trying to be humorous, friendly and warm." (p. 13)

The specific Christmas rituals were valued as they represented the connectedness between people. A meal for example, was more than just food.

> "The meal is an acknowledgement, more so an affirmation. Just saying, you matter." (p. 14)

The women attempted to create a holiday in which there were positive relationships. Quite often this would require negotiating skills in order to ensure a positive atmosphere.

> "My mother was responsible for all aspects of it, including keeping the peace most of the time. Because my father had a drinking history and at times of celebration it was particularly easy to rationalize that kind of behaviour. She never knew what response was going to provoke my father, and she walked on [tenterhooks]. Christmas had a great potential for being a lot less than what expectations say it should be." (p. 15)

The meaning and significance of Christmas was enhanced by relationality; by the ability of mothers to reinforce loving and warm relationships. However the work that mother had to do to defuse tensions and sustain positive relationships is often masked by our tendency to simply restate what Christmas 'should be'. The reality is that family relationships are often tense and problematic, and considerable emotional skill and effort is often necessary if the ideology of the collective 'self' (the 'happy' family) is to be successfully, and temporarily, resurrected and re-established.

Some Christmases were less pleasant because the women who had a focal position in the provision of the holiday refused to do this any more.

> "I think my mother's nervous breakdown was due very largely to the fact that every single Christmas celebration...was left entirely to her... it certainly contributed largely to the fact that she won't do a thing now. She won't even wipe a dish. And during these Christmas celebrations, even when she hasn't done anything, she gets infuriated.., because Christmas for her now brings back memories of utter resentment towards the rest of us, even the kids. She hates Christmas now, and she'll never lift a finger to

help out again." (p. 19)

Some of the interviewed women had then redesigned the role structure in their families so that the work of organizing family Christmas, and possibly the leisure that some family members experienced in general, was not their total responsibility. However most of the interviewees still maintained the total work load including relationality and physical tasks. As well, most of the women still performed the 'invisible' emotional and organizational work requisite for the production of Christmas.

All of the women worked to produce and reproduce Christmas, when as children they had experienced the holiday with joy; as leisure. The work that women do to provide leisure for their families is a strong example of the reproductive labor that women perform (Luxton, 1980). Particular Christmas rituals, such as gift buying, wrapping, decorations, preparing the feast, doing the baking and leaving a snack for Santa and his reindeer, are undertaken as an expression of... "the relationships they are intended to strengthen, the people they are intended to affirm as important, and the ties to the past that they represent." (Bella, 1987: 22)

The last of the selected articles which uncovers women's perspectives on leisure in everyday life is Cerullo and Ewen's (1984) study on 'family camping' in New England. The authors found women to be among the most loyal supporters of this kind of vacation as they could escape from the more private, routine housework and isolation, and bring the family closer together:

tasks which parallel the productive and relational work that Bella discusses.

Camping requires work by both men and women; the tasks of planning, preparing, packing, hosting social events, cooking, tidying up and caring for children exist without the conveniences of home. However, the campers reported that the campground was a relaxed place in which people did not have to work to the clock.

To the women at the campsites, camping was a chance to get away from housework. They viewed their houses as endless sources of toil.

> "When you're sitting in your backyard... you think of a hundred things you have to do- dusting, cleaning... here there's no cleaning... who cares?" (p. 38)

But getting time away from their homes did not simply mean that the women had to perform fewer tasks, it meant a transformation in the social experience of housework. While camping, the 'women's work' did not just come into contact with family members (reproductive labor), as is common with normal day to day routines. Suddenly it was made public, visible, and more importantly, was often shared.

The women reported that their husbands did more 'housework' when they were camping than when they were at home. However the kinds of chores that the men would do had a tendency to reinforce the division of labour within the families. For example... "men tended to do the festive, visible, outdoor cooking at the barbecue (evocative... of the return from the

hunt), while women continued to do the routine, often indoor, cooking and preparing of food that turned barbecued meat into a family meal." (p. 39)

It was the escape from daily routines, the isolation and the invisibility of domestic labour that the women sought. The very social interaction which the campsite provided tended to ease the burden of chores for the women, suggesting the general isolation of the routines of daily urban living. The separation of work and home during the 'normal' year (outside of vacations) and the rising demands of family survival have caused camping to become a vehicle for family cohesion; for relationality. Camping was believed to be a way to keep the family together as it was "...the only time to really be a family. At home everybody's off in their own direction." (p. 40)

The campers in Cerullo and Ewen's study considered the quality of family life to be harmed by the demands of a capitalist economy, the increasing detachment of work and home, and the excessive demands of time schedules; all aspects of an increasingly complex society. Although time schedules are not demanding in themselves, it is the demands of the things (activities and groups) on our schedules. Some of these are real 'demands', such as work and perhaps especially second jobs or jobs that have long or unsocial hours. Others point to the way we structure other activities such as classes, community meetings and social events, until we have very little unstructured time left. The re-creation of inequality between men and women that existed from the home to the campsite was not

considered a problem as the women felt that relationships between family members were strengthened during the activity. Campsites were also seen as a sanctum from the plausible family-threatening effects of harried city life.

As Rubin examined the feelings of individual family members in a number of different families about their work, leisure and life, Bella concentrated on women's role in the production of Christmas, and Cerullo and Ewen focused on women's role in providing family camping. While women viewed certain aspects of providing leisure experiences for others as leisure itself, their role remained one of provider or tension manager. Thus, although it afforded most of these women very real pleasures when other family members visibly enjoyed themselves, in important respects it was not very different from their usual domestic labour. When camping, women preferred the increased sociability, the consequent decreased isolation, and the fact that men contributed more toward chores than usual. What seemed to be very important to the women in the studies was relationality or the strengthening of family ties through caring and supporting the family, something which is discounted in conceptions of leisure as time or activities.

Women's life experience then, as their leisure, is very different from men's. Inequalities exist in their experiences of leisure, females generally having access to less. This finding could lead us to question what solutions may be offered for the inequalities in leisure accessibility that exist between the sexes.

2.6 TOWARDS CHANGE: NOT JUST LEISURE 'FOR' WOMEN, BUT LEISURE 'BY' WOMEN

Bella (1986) believes that the concept of leisure has political implications. Citing Shapiro (1981), she supports the notion that to name an entity is an empowering function...

> "...discursive practices are political and social practices, that to speak within an established mode of speaking is not simply to support some individuals or groups over others but also to reproduce and affirm the existing system of power in the society." (Bella, 1986: 37)

The act of naming something that is applicable to one's own life experience is self-empowering. Conversely, the act of naming something that is applicable to another's life is an act of domination over the other person. The act of naming then can be seen as performing a controlling function. Bella argues that women "...should reclaim their experiences by finding words other than work and leisure to name experiences that make up [their] lives." (Bella, 1986: 38)

Bella believes that work on the androcentrism of leisure is in a 'process of becoming' and that we should conduct studies that use different words and concepts to explore people's lived experiences. These new terms should be concerned with relationality; words that provide a more integrative understanding of life experience than do the dichotomies of work and leisure. The author argues that the concept of relationality enables women to place worth in the obligations of all persons to others (improved and mutually-empowering relationships) whereas the definition of leisure as 'freedom from obligation' discounts obligation and relationality.

Therefore, within relationality, current approaches to leisure such as the leisure and capitalism and leisure studies perspectives, and concepts such as leisure being a specific time, or activity, have no legitimate significance. Bella advises that we then disregard leisure as having any meaning within women's lives and that we should not use the term 'leisure' to refer to women's experiences at all.

However, we should question whether or not to rename something simply because it may not be representative of all persons' experiences. Just as Bella describes the ineffectiveness of leisure in describing women's lives as being in a 'process of becoming', I believe that perspectives on women and leisure in general are in a process of becoming; constantly being challenged and changing to more appropriately deal with the changing nature of society. As well, an act of restructuring rather than completely renaming leisure could be considered to be performing a wider empowering function than one which would only represent one group. Restructuring leisure concepts would cause them to be increasingly representative of a broader spectrum of public interests than abandoning them for the use of other terms altogether. In short, I am suggesting maintaining the term 'leisure', but changing the connotations attached to it. Research such as this study on women and leisure in a hinterland community represents a contribution to a feminist transformation of concepts of leisure. By situating women in the social structure and by allowing them to name their own experiences, new meanings for terms such as leisure will be

established.

I support a continued effort to reconstruct leisure concepts to include women's experiences, as well as any other groups that are currently underrepresented, and an analysis of how and why leisure involves struggle and is connected to power relations. By enabling and focusing attention on groups which have traditionally been ignored or remained silent, a counter balance will develop to the present situation of an androcentric, as well as a white, middle class, familist bias. Reconstructing the study of leisure to include women is a challenge for leisure practitioners, researchers, students, academics, and perhaps for those in the social sciences in general.

An exploration and increased understanding of relationality, involving qualitative research which focuses on disclosing the meaning of events to different women around traditionally considered aspects of group leisure would further concepts of leisure. Only when we begin to formally recognize the full significance of the contributions that women have made to the increased experiences of leisure, relationality and empowerment of others, can these contributions be seen as valued rather than remaining as "...invisible to positivist researchers using androcentric concepts." (Bella, 1986:41) An alternate approach to the study of leisure should then be adopted which recognizes the importance of relational aspects of life and leisure and which attempts to comprehend and appreciate the multi-faceted, interdependent experience of being human.

A study on women and leisure in the town of Cranbrook, represents an attempt to 'fill the void' in studies done on women in community settings by incorporating a feminist approach to the concept of leisure into research on women in hinterland communities. This study on women, leisure and community will take a feminist approach which incorporates a belief that leisure is something which is struggled over and involves aspects of power, that it is very important to involve leisure in strategies for social change, and that it is possible to transform leisure from a practice which helps to subordinate disadvantaged social groups to one that serves to empower them. By using such an approach, it is believed that a clearer understanding will emerge of what it means to be a woman in a hinterland community and of how the concept of leisure adequately or inadequately describes the experiences and quality of life of individual women in such a community.

If complete separation between various perspectives on leisure continues, then there will be little chance of change occurring. Without completely rejecting separate domain assumptions, it is valuable and progressive to bring out similarities in the arguments of different approaches to the study of women and leisure. It becomes clear then that an improved understanding and inclusion of aspects of relationality may strengthen not only our understanding of traditionally male concepts of leisure, but also our domain assumptions, or our 'points of departure' to the study of women and leisure. Therefore, our understanding of the human condition will be

improved by our acknowledgement of the importance of relationality at both the practical and theoretical levels. Constructing our own perspectives on women and leisure and building a common understanding of this area of study will also serve to enable change, improve our understanding of social processes, and seize traditionally androcentric terms such as leisure, to represent our own experiences.

CHAPTER 3.
REVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGICAL LITERATURE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, FEMINIST RESEARCH.

> "If we actually reflect on our situation we will find that the subject, thus situated in the world and submitting to its influences, is at the same time he [or she] who thinks the world." Merleau - Ponty (1974:241)

The purpose of this chapter is to present a methodological review of the literature in order to develop an argument to support an appropriate research strategy to deal with the problems surrounding women and leisure in a community setting.

In the first section, research paradigms, qualitative methods and the feminist contributions to them, will be discussed. In the second section, proposed methods for a study of women, leisure and community settings will be presented.

3.1 REVIEW

3.1.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: THE INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM

Paradigms model the particular conceptual framework through which a research community functions and in terms of which a distinct interpretation of 'reality' is arrived at. They incorporate "...models of research, standards, rules of enquiry and a set of techniques and methods, all of which ensure that any theoretical knowledge that is produced will be consistent with the view of reality that the paradigm supports." (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:72) As well, they augment that reality by answering some questions which, presumably, others working from its assumptions will have raised (or at least will understand). Methodologies which derive from the interpretive paradigm of

social enquiry seek to replace the natural scientific model of explanation, prediction and control, with the interpretive notions of understanding, meaning and action.

A prime controversy in the development of social thought has concerned the relationship between the understanding that people have of their own actions and the purpose of the social sciences. Many argue that the social sciences must adopt the methods of the natural sciences and that everyday understanding is a point of departure from the search for testable hypotheses and general laws. However others have argued that social life is the product of these everyday understandings, and that the social sciences should be directed towards understanding how these 'everyday understandings' are constructed, enforced and ultimately changed, rather than causal explanation (Carr and Kemmis, 1986).

Methodology is a term which broadly refers to the process, principles and procedures by which we see problems and search for their answers. In the social sciences, it refers to how one conducts research. As in everything that we do in life, our beliefs, interests and goals vastly influence our choice of research methodology. A methodology that stems from the interpretive paradigm is that of phenomenology. The phenomenologist, working from the assumptions of the interpretive paradigm, seeks to understand the participant's perspective through methods such as participant observation, open-ended interviews and the examination of personal documents. These methods produce data which enable the

phenomenologist to view the world as the participant does, and data which seek to convey the distinctive qualities of the meanings participants invest their actions with. If more universal meanings can be drawn from the study of particular cases, so much the better, but the persuasiveness of qualitative data does not lie in numbers and the discovery of universal laws is not the object of research.

The phenomenologist is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the individual's own perspective; what is of greatest importance is what a person imagines it to be. In general then, phenomenology stresses that we must come to understand the phenomenon that we are concerned with, not least by trying to be aware of what, in our own thinking, constitutes a bias and by being willing to revise or at least suspend these ideas. We must become involved with the perceptions of the actor. As stated by Armistead (1974)...,"'Phenomena' are not events in the outside world, perceived by a passive observer, but interpretations by an active subject who invests his [or her] environment with meaning and acts intentionally in relation to that environment." (p:22-3)

In another discussion of phenomenology and human agency, Whitson (1976) states that if we hope to discover social life, we must experience life as much as possible as our subjects do. In this way the researcher can understand the dialectic relationship between the structural and cultural factors which have helped to shape the subject's beliefs and ways of interpreting social life, and the subject's active (or passive)

responses to that situation. Whitson (1976) states that... "only to the extent that we understand the two-way nature of the dialectic of social creation, can we play our own role in this process in a manner that is deliberate rather than haphazard and semi-conscious."(p.68) The importance of relating to, or understanding the processes of human agency and social construction is crucial to the phenomenologist. From this perspective we can then view human beings as being products of their personal biographies, and, in turn, of their social worlds. The task of the researcher is to create a dialectic between the two entities, raise the consciousness of the participants of their own roles in these worlds, and thereby create a future that is more full of the possibilities of human agency.

3.1.2 QUALITATIVE METHODS

Wilkinson (1986) proposes..., 'if you want to know why someone does something, why don't you ask them and they just might tell you?' The use of qualitative methods originally became popular in American sociology in the early 1900's. The underlying methodologies were directed at understanding community settings, and how the individuals within those settings were shaped by and in turn shaped the specific character of these communities. The subject of the study is not then reduced to a segregated variable or to a hypothesis, but is viewed as part of a whole system of forces. Undeniably, the methods by which we choose to study people affects how we view them. As stated by Bogdan and Taylor (1975),

"When we reduce people to statistical aggregates,

> we lose sight of the subjective nature of human behaviour. Qualitative methods allow us to know people personally and to see them as they are developing their own definitions of the world. We experience what they experience in their daily struggles with their society. We learn about groups and experiences about which we may know nothing." (p.4-5)

Qualitative methods also allow us to gain insight into concepts that are rendered invisible in other research approaches; indeed "...such concepts as beauty, pain, faith, suffering, frustration, hope, and love can be studied as they are defined and expressed by real people in their everyday lives." (Ibid:5).

Two main approaches to qualitative research methods are participant observation and unstructured interviews. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) refer to participant observation as "...research characterized by a period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the participants, in the milieu of the latter."(p.5) Data from participant observation is unobtrusively and systematically collected. What is meant by personal documents and unstructured interviewing is materials in which participants disclose, in their own words, their view of their world, or part of it. Through qualitative methods we can then learn things about people and the world that we would not otherwise learn.

In their micro-level ethnography of a community of women cocktail waitresses in a college bar called 'Brady's', Spradley and Mann (1975) state that ethnography, or the description of another culture in its own terms, is the cornerstone of anthropological research. They suggest that three important principles are involved in ethnographic analysis and they use

these three principles to guide their study. Firstly, every human group creates its own reality, a shared culture. Specific to this point is that human beings "...are the only animals that do not live in the real world [and that] with relatively few instincts to guide our perceptions and reactions to our environment, we live in created worlds of culture." (p.6)

Secondly, people take their own culture for granted and "...most person's customs are outside awareness." (p.7) For example, the authors understand that there are male and female ways to talk, act and move. Ethnography is the tool that Spradley and Mann use to uncover "...the things people have learned but forgotten, the things that they use every day of their lives to tell others they are men and women." (p.8) Another important objective of the study was stated as being an attempt to discover this implicit dimension of culture.

The third principle is that there is usually more than one cultural perspective on any particular social situation. The authors suggest that when we examine complex societies such as that of the United States, the number of cultural perspectives for any social situation greatly increases. The research findings at Brady's Bar indicate "...that the people who came to drink night after night did not all have the same cultural definitions of the events and performances that occurred." (p.10) The authors suggest that the most important difference in perspective involved the divergent views of men and women, an insight which led them to chose to examine Brady's Bar from one perspective, that of the cocktail waitress.

In a brief discussion on women and anthropology, the authors suggest that in every society, some persons have a lower value than others. This situation creates systems of inequality where... "individuals with lower status tend to receive less respect, and to be treated more as objects and less as persons. When persons become objects we can invade their privacy without hesitation, talk about them in their presence, manipulate their behaviour, and keep them in their assigned places." (p.10) Whenever a group of persons are made to be objects, however, they become socially invisible. The authors state that anthropologists are guilty of contributing to the social invisibility of women as most ethnographies are androcentric and few do more than scarcely mention the role of women in society. The authors state that the overall goal of their own study is to "...see experience through the eyes of these women, to describe their culture in their terms, and to see the larger context in which such behaviour occurs. We hope to retain the wholeness and detail of their everyday experiences as cocktail waitresses and to avoid the distortion which comes from relegating women to a category of secondary theoretical interest."(p.12)

The two authors spent one year collecting the data, with Mann conducting initial field research, then both persons conducting interviews at the bar, and finally analysing the data and relating it to theoretical development in the social sciences. At the time that the study was conducted, Mann worked as a cocktail waitress while Spradley applied the method of using the participant-observer as informant. Due to the

authors' sensitivity to the issues surrounding these women working in a man's world, and their constant attempts to relate everyday life at the bar to theoretical development, they are successful at appropriately representing the cocktail waitresses' perspectives. Those who read the ethnography are left with a feeling of knowing what the nuances, complexities and unwritten rules of being a cocktail waitress would be like. Not only do the methods enable a clearer picture to be formed of life as the cocktail waitresses in Brady's Bar, they also illuminate the realities of women who experience the same kinds of oppression in other realms of life. Works of this type sensitize us to the relationships of oppression and subordination which transcend the specific settings or community.

The second selected ethnography that is commensurate with qualitative research from a feminist perspective is Luxton's study on three generations of women's work in the homes of Flin Flon, Manitoba. The author had two goals for the study. Firstly, to situate domestic labour within the development of industrial capitalism (historically) in North America, and secondly, to make public the actual work processes of the household as women experienced them, and to illustrate the impact of these historical changes on women's lives. In order to uncover these women's experiences, Luxton lived as the locals did and states that "...by sharing their experiences I began to know the complexity and richness of their daily life."(p.38) Luxton took part in the daily life of women and comments that...

"I shared their work, doing my own shopping,

> cooking, cleaning and helping them with the same tasks. I babysat their children, and cared for my own when they came to visit on holidays. I socialised at the community centre, at the bar and at parties. We visited and talked, and I asked endless questions. By combining shared experience with constant observation, I gradually developed a sense of what work, and life, was like to Flin Flon women."(Luxton p.38)

Luxton lived in the community for six months as a participant-observer before formulating a questionnaire to use in structured interviews which she conducted for the next eight months along with other methods for gathering data. The questionnaires were based on five different interview schedules used in studies on family and women's work that, with the help of comments from five close friends in Flin Flon, were eventually formed into one appropriate questionnaire that included both structured and open-ended questions. Specifically, Luxton interviewed five women who had set up households in Flin Flon in the 1920's, fifteen who had done so in the 1930's, and ten each from the 1940's, 50's, 60's and 70's. This made a total of sixty interviews. As well, she interviewed twenty women who were born in Flin Flon and whose mothers still lived there, in an attempt to discover patterns of how women learn domestic labour and of how they pass it on to their daughters. Finally, because childrearing is such an integral part of domestic labour, Luxton interviewed an additional twenty women who had at least one preschool child. In addition to these interviews, Luxton conducted time budget studies, complete financial budgets and household inventories of selected families, examined photo albums and other household

memorabilia, and interviewed a small group of men.

During the process of analysing and writing up the data, Luxton sent chapters to several of the people who were study participants for their perusal. The author states that... "This is a relatively under-utilized technique in the social sciences. It could be employed more regularly as one way of giving the people involved in the study some input into what is being said about them." (Luxton p.40) Not only does this step allow participants to become more fully involved in the process, it can be an empowering event. Study participants can experience empowerment by being encouraged to name their own experiences.

Bella's (1987) article, discussed in Chapter two, exemplifies many of the same research practices which Spradley and Mann and Luxton have used.

3.1.3 FEMINIST CONTRIBUTIONS TO QUALITATIVE METHODS

Feminist researchers have demonstrably used qualitative methods in part in order to allow women to speak of their experience in their own words, and perhaps thereby to articulate their responses to their common experiences in a patriarchal society. Feminist perspectives have also brought some insights to the practice of qualitative research which illuminate issues of power and insecurity, and activity and passivity in the interview situation. These issues have then been clearly articulated and linked to social theory, especially theories about the significance of gender as a structuring principle of social life. Oakley's (1981) article entitled "Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms" uncovers some problems raised

for feminist social scientists in adopting the standard criteria as set out in some methods text-books.

Using their study of transition to motherhood, Oakley discusses the challenges of longitudinal interviewing, and the quantity and kinds of questions asked by interviewees of interviewers. It is the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee as prescribed by positivists that Oakley disagrees with. The relationship is to be distant but close, in other words there must exist...

> "the acceptance by the interviewee of the interviewer's research goals and the interviewee's active search to help the interviewer in providing the relevant information. The person who is interviewed has a passive role in adapting to the definition of the situation offered by the person doing the interviewing. The person doing the interviewing must actively and continually construct the 'respondent' as passive. Another way to phrase this is to say that both interviewer and interviewee must be 'socialised' into the correct interviewing behaviour." (Oakley, p.35)

According to proponents of the survey-method, 'properly socialized' interviewees are not supposed to ask questions back. However, Oakley found that women in her study looked to her for many questions that they had about medical issues, the childbirth experience, and post natal care. Citing various survey method interview textbooks, Oakley puts forth the issue of what is recommended protocol if one is asked a question by a respondent. If he (the interviewer) "...should be asked for his views, he should laugh off the request with the remark that his job at the moment is to get the opinions, not to have them..."(p.35) was one piece of advice given. Besides the use of sexist language in these texts, androcentric notions are the

guiding principles. In support of qualitative methods, Oakley suggests that issues relevant to women be taken into account. From this study, where close relationships with participants were formed, and interviews were conducted regularly and over a long period of time, Oakley suggests that points of 'relationality' be included in the process of qualitative research. The interview becomes a conversation between two people who are interested in each other as persons, and are getting to know each other better.

In renouncing positivistic methods for their inability to get at women's experiences, Oakley states three broad problems. Firstly, that the interviewing situation can be a one-way process in which the interviewer elicits and receives, but does not offer information. Secondly, that positivistic textbooks advise interviewers to adopt an authoritative attitude to interviewees, which narrows the data they are likely to gain access to. Thirdly, that interviews should have no personal meaning in terms of relationality or social interaction but are rather to premise their meaning on statistical comparability to other interview data. Oakley uncovers the practical difficulties with realising this survey-method prescription for what interviewing ought to be.

Through Oakley's discussion, it becomes evident that the goal of understanding people through interviewing is best met when the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical, and when the interviewer contributes part of his or her own self to the relationship. The women in Oakley's

study asked many questions back and repeated interviewing established a basis of personal dialogue and involvement.

Wilkinson (1986) articulates similar arguments and expands on them. Suggesting that feminist research is based on an exploration of women's own knowledge and experience, but in a disciplined, scholarly and rigorous way, Wilkinson (1986) discusses how a feminist contribution to research might develop. Firstly, differences in the terms 'non-sexist', 'feminist', and 'women's studies' are dealt with in regard to research. Non-sexist research is used to refer to avoiding sexist practices, such as assuming that all who are researched are male and that women's experiences are the same as men's. Feminist research is used to assume a perspective in which women's experiences, ideas, and needs are valid in their own right. It is also oriented towards a particular group of issues and is intended to inform women's practice, individually and collectively, as they struggle with patriarchal institutions. This research also includes an element of working toward political and social change. Research done in the women's studies perspective refers to academic research on the study of women and the establishment of multidisciplinary courses on the social and cultural context of being a woman.

Secondly, the author presents a framework for a feminist critique of research which covers the substantive, ideological, and theoretical areas. One feminist criticism of mainstream social scientific research is aimed at its androcentric content. It takes a 'redress the issues' stance which

emphasizes research on women, where they have previously been made invisible. The emphasis in this area is on removing sexist bias rather than on challenging the fundamental assumptions of the ways of going about research. Critiques of the ideological biases of established disciplines have also been made. For example, Smith (1978) writes of the ways in which the 'male as norm' principle (all too often simply an unexamined assumption) has distorted scholarship in sociology; and the point has also been made with respect to psychology (Gilligan, 1982) and leisure studies (Bella, 1988).

Thirdly, Wilkinson presents a feminist alternative to traditional mainstream social science research. The author stresses the importance of a shift in focus from the content of research being 'on' women, to an account of its purpose being research 'for' women. A framework for feminist qualitative research should then include three sub-characteristics. Firstly, there must be a reflexive and self-reflexive quality where we come to know women as their own sources of experience (Bella, 1986). Secondly, a non-hierarchical relationship between the researcher and the researchee must exist where we know ourselves as participants in a common goal (Oakley, 1981). Thirdly, women's research must take the risks of subjective involvement in order to gain new theoretical knowledge (Birrell and Richter, 1987).

Lastly, Wilkinson stresses that feminist research is not simply traditional research that is conducted in a non-sexist manner, or which includes topics of 'interest' to women, but

rather involves "...a critical evaluation of the research process, in terms of its adequacy in tapping women's experience." (Wilkinson, 1987:2) Substantial reconceptualization of the interdependencies of ideology, theory, method and research topic is necessary, and the author warns that some feminist studies will not be similar to traditional science and therefore are not subject to evaluation by traditional criteria. Feminist research could be evaluated by many different criteria, however pivotal to these is the success of theories and methods in uncovering women's experiences. This could be done in a number of ways and does not mean that feminist research must always be relegated exclusively to the study of women. Rather, the feminist perspective can be used to contribute to, create and develop a more humanistic paradigm, through which we can enrich our understanding of the whole of human reality for both males and females.

3.2 PROPOSED STUDY: WOMEN, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY

Through this review, I have suggested the appropriateness of qualitative methods with a feminist perspective to the study of women, leisure and community. In defending this particular research strategy, I have provided examples of studies of selected authors who are successful at uncovering the depth and meaning of women's experiences. Due to the success of the ethnographic analyses cited in this paper at 'doing social life', I chose to use a combination of the research techniques used by Spradley and Mann (1975), Luxton (1980) and Bella

(1987).

This study represents an attempt to describe and discuss the relationships between many aspects of the literature on women, leisure and community and secondly, to 'fill the void' in studies done on women in community settings by incorporating a concept of leisure into research on women in hinterland communities. The purpose of this study is to provide a clearer understanding of what it means to be a woman in a hinterland community and of how the concept of leisure adequately or inadequately describes the experiences and quality of life of individual women in such a community; that of Cranbrook, British Columbia.

Using some of the guidelines for conducting feminist qualitative research as discussed by Wilkinson (1986), this research is by and also for women. It has a reflexive and self-reflexive quality, for, as a resident of the community, I referred back to interviewees for their comments and for clarification of points. The relationship between the interviewer and interviewees was non-hierarchical, and subjective involvement was used to contribute to new conceptual and theoretical knowledge.

An important aspect of doing qualitative research is in considering the impact of the study on its participants. Both Luxton (1980) and Bella (1987) made explicit attempts to include their participants in stages of the study in which they were encouraged to express what they felt about the way the study was being conducted and the theoretical stances that accounts were

being related to. In this way, participants are given an active role in the creation of the study. Giving some control to the participants can be experienced as an empowering capacity. As Bella (1988) states... "to name, and thereby classify, an experience, an activity or even a time span, is an active exercise of power ...If that which is labelled is part of one's own life then the act is self-empowering, in the sense used by the women's movement and the peace movement."(p. 16-17) Study participants have been given access to information from this study as it has been created. The final stage of the interview process also provided social contacts for those who were study participants, giving the opportunity to share feelings, and thoughts about their lives. Women should be given the opportunity to reclaim their experiences by naming for themselves, the experiences that make up their lives. By enabling participants to express their feelings about the direction of the study findings, an understanding of how we might start to reclaim and reconstruct the concept of leisure as we currently understand it occurred and a degree of empowerment resulted.

3.3 CONCLUSION

A methodological review of the literature has been presented that serves to develop an argument to support an appropriate research strategy to deal with the issues surrounding women and leisure in a community setting. The research methods found to be most appropriate are those that are qualitative and informed by feminism. An outline of a proposed

study of women and leisure in a hinterland community has been prefigured on the basis of the ability of qualitative methods to get at an understanding of the nuances, complexities and realities of everyday life.

CHAPTER 4.
SPECIFIC STUDY METHODS

4.1 THE HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of this study is to provide a clearer understanding of what it means to be a woman in a hinterland community and of how the concept of leisure adequately or inadequately describes the experiences and quality of life of individual women in such a community. The particular hinterland community from which I chose a population of women to research is Cranbrook, British Columbia.

This study examines the limitations of the dominant meanings of 'leisure' in describing the life experiences of women in this hinterland community, and suggests ways in which this concept should be changed to incorporate women's perspectives. Women have a special contribution to make as resident experts on the quality of life in hinterland communities, their expertise must be made visible.

Methods of data collection have been conducted in adherence to the techniques outlined in Bogdan and Taylor (1975). They are: observation as a community resident over a one year period, and participant observation as a local college employee, and as a member of the Cranbrook Women's Resource Society. As well, semi-structured interviews with twenty-one women residents and unstructured interviews with approximately thirty women residents were completed. Finally, document analysis of the local newspapers, the Kootenay Advertiser, the Cranbrook Daily Townsmen, and of publications and related papers of the East

Kootenay Community College Cranbrook campus, the Corporation of the City of Cranbrook and the Cranbrook Women's Resource Society was conducted. The information presented in this thesis is based mainly on the content analysis of the twenty-one semi-structured interviews and participant observation at East Kootenay Community College and the Cranbrook Women's Centre (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Turner, 1981).

4.2 THE SETTING

4.2.1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITY

Cranbrook is an incorporated city of approximately 15,000 residents which is located in the Southeastern corner of British Columbia. It is the most populated city in the East Kootenay Regional District, of which it is part. The city lies in a geographically isolated area between the Purcell Mountains in the West and the Rocky Mountains in the East. Approximate distances from Cranbrook to Calgary, the nearest Canadian city, are 500 kilometres, to Vancouver 1,000 kilometres, and to Spokane, Washington, 400 kilometres. Resource extraction (mining and forestry operations) is of primary economic importance to the region. Since Cranbrook is the largest centre in the Kootenays, the community serves a central transportation and service centre function to the region. Cranbrook is characterized by a more diversified commercial and retail sector than any other town in the East Kootenay Regional District. The largest employers are the Canadian Pacific Railway and Crestbrook Forest Industries. As both federal and provincial Government offices have centralized their operations in

Cranbrook, there is a higher proportion of people involved in public administration than in other towns in the region (Strong, Hall and Associates, 1983). A city with a relatively young population, Cranbrook has an average of 44.9 % persons under the age of 25, which is slightly above the Provincial average of 42.8% (Strong, Hall and Associates, 1983: 9). As well, males have higher rates of labour participation than females, reflecting the fact that jobs are predominantly held by males in resource based communities (Statistics Canada, 1984). Koch (1988) states that... "the wives of these men, who would have a greater chance of working in urban areas, find themselves less likely to be employed in the resource based localities..." (p. 50)

4.2.2 DEFINITION OF HINTERLAND COMMUNITIES

According to Koch (1988), in a study which examines the strategies that individuals use to meet goals associated with daily life and work in non-urban resource-based communities, community is symbolically constructed, defined and maintained as an available means for particular individual and group interests. Although several East Kootenay towns are examined, the community used as a basis for analysis in Koch's study is Cranbrook, British Columbia.

Koch states that... "what emerges out of this analysis of the region is that it is a hinterland and the localities that make it up are hinterland localities. According to the literature on metropolis-hinterland or dependency theory, the distinguishing characteristic of a hinterland is that the local

economic activities are owned and controlled by outside agencies, particularly multinational corporations headquartered elsewhere. The consequences of this for the hinterland is population instability, economic precariousness and political marginality." (p.58)

The term 'hinterland' is, however, relative as Cranbrook can be seen as a hinterland to Vancouver, which can in turn be a hinterland to localities in Eastern Canada, which can in turn be a hinterland to the United States. Rather than a dichotomy of either urban or hinterland localities, the relationship of hinterland to urban centres must be considered to be more of a continuum of development, dependency and relationality.

For this study then, Cranbrook will be described as a hinterland locality that is situated at an elementary stage in a hinterland continuum. It is a non-urban area that is characterized by social ambivalence, in that many residents joke about Cranbrook as being a place where 'hicks' live or as the 'sticks',(as if no one or nothing of any importance lives or happens here), economic precariousness, and political marginality. The hinterland-dependency model is not without its flaws however and, before we continue, some shortcomings of this model will be discussed.

While the use of this model in examining community has made us aware of the importance of political and economic power relations, it has neglected consideration of patriarchal power structures and has also served to cover up the everyday lives of people. In a critique of a hinterland-dependency analysis of

rural Newfoundland, House (1986), cited in Koch (1988), states:

> ...[the] work makes hardly any reference at all to the rich ethnographic record of rural Newfoundland... Why not? Because, presumably, inshore fishermen and their families are 'blocked' in a pre-capitalist mode of production that must be swept away by the progressive tides of history. The ethnographies and, by implication, the people they describe are simply irrelevant to the theoretical predilections of the Neo-Marxist orthodoxy on development." (p.187)

Koch argues that a major shortcoming of research on hinterlands is that it is done on them and not in them. The literature on hinterland communities tends to describe local institutions and processes only from the point of view of the broader forces of urban, industrial-capitalist society.

While this view of the hinterland has its merits,...

> "it is insufficient because it does not take into account the strategies that are employed by people as they interpret, respond to or render meaningful the events that occur in their everyday lives. To add to this dimension of our understanding of human behaviour in complex society, we must change our perspective, we must incorporate a view from the 'bottom up' rather than from the 'top down'. In turn, this changes our examination from an exercise where definitions are imposed by the researcher to one where we look for actors' meanings; the product of such an analysis attempts to present experience and action in terms of the insider rather than the outsider... Therefore, to incorporate this dimension into our understanding of life in hinterland localities, we must undertake to do an ethnography of these places." (Koch, 1988: 68-69)

Yet there is an established critique of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism which argues that much ethnography, in its focus on the details of daily experience, never seriously addresses how experience itself is constructed by larger social forces that the individuals in question may be only vaguely

aware of. The important point is that we, as researchers, must try to transcend the limitations which follow from focusing exclusively on either structures or agents.

In this study, I want to strike a balance between ethnography which examines structures (such as those of patriarchal society) and that which examines the thoughts and feelings of women community residents as to their everyday lives. This ethnographic account is also critical as, upon examination of the imposed and dominant definitions of popular concepts (such as leisure and family) that are used to guide and shape our lives, a transformation of these concepts and therefore, these lives, will be sought. The end goal of this critical ethnography is the beginning of a transformation of a few of our popular concepts, (which at present are used to represent all of our lives, when in fact they represent the lives of very few of us) the claiming of them for women, and the strengthening of women's networks and women's culture in the community.

4.3 SPECIFIC DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The specific data collection techniques used for this study are observation, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews and document analysis (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975).

4.3.1 OBSERVATION

Observation for the study was conducted over a one year period from April 1988 to April 1989 as a resident of the community. This data does not by any means comprise the

majority of material for the study. It does represent the basis for the idea for the study however, for it was as a new resident of the community that I noticed some differences between women's lives in Cranbrook, and life in other larger cities.

4.3.2 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Participant observation took place as I visited with women in their homes, in my home, socialized with them at other events, attended their organization's meetings, and worked with them in the community. Specifically, I became a participant observer at the Cranbrook Women's Resource Society, the Cranbrook Campus of East Kootenay Community College, and a local committee formed to address the recreational needs of handicapped residents.

Firstly, I became a regular participant in the Wednesday morning speaker series presentations at the Cranbrook Women's Resource Society, also known as 'The Women's Centre' . In this program, various women residents of the community would come to the centre to speak about their jobs or special skills that they have. Various women residents would gather there to listen to the speaker, ask questions and socialize with other women. Many of the women would bring their children to the Wednesday morning program. There is an area for the children to play while their mothers take part in the Centre offerings.

The Centre is an organisation that is governed by a Board of Directors. It is located in a rented building in the older downtown area. It is a member of the British Columbia Association of Women's Centres and is funded by the Secretary of

State. Each year, a representative of the Secretary of State visits the centre and presents a list of issues for which women's centres may receive funding to look into. After this yearly meeting, the Centre Directors meet and decide what issues need to be addressed in terms of women in Cranbrook and they apply for funding to use in properly addressing them. This year, the women's Centre received funding to work in the areas of improving women's literacy, improving day care, instigating a women's studies course at the high school level and researching whether or not women in the community feel that they are receiving equitable access to services.

As well, the Centre runs programs (when they receive funding to do so) such as a battered women's support group, and a job re-entry class for those women who have been out of the workforce and who wish to return. Last year, the Centre raised enough funds to buy the first birthing bed for the community. The two part-time paid women who work at the Centre emphasize its 'drop-in' and 'shelter' role, stating that it is regarded by many as a 'safer' place to go than the local crisis centre as there are usually no men present at the women's centre during day hours. At night, the Centre is used by many community groups such as the 'Concerned Parents for Childcare' or 'Alcoholics Anonymous'. The population who attend the Centre during the day hours are of all ages, usually with children, and of all statuses... married, single, divorced, separated. If any of the women who attend the Centre are lesbian, no one has ever divulged this. Generally, both the gay and lesbian populations

are extremely marginalized and persecuted in Cranbrook and so I have never seen evidence of these populations here. I suspect that these persons must have very secret and hidden relationships in order to simply survive in town. There are great opportunities for informal interaction at the Women's Centre, due to the mix of women who attend the varied programs. I partook of this interaction with enthusiasm as I realised early the value of such a place in finding women, who were interested in social issues and in meeting others, as persons to discuss problems and solutions to our everyday lives.

As an employee of the College, I taught a week-long communications skills workshop for women students in the Dental Assistant's Program and I became the assistant facilitator in the International Education Program. Both positions enabled me to participate in planning, and working with women residents who were students, faculty or staff at the College. As well, due to the nature of the International Education position, I was required to come into regular contact with many general residents of the community to plan student homestay situations and to seek out persons with special skills to entertain visiting students from other countries.

Lastly, I was approached by a woman whom I have known as a community resident and as a part-time College employee, and asked to become a participant observer in a local group. She asked if I would participate in a recently formed group interested in addressing the recreational needs of handicapped community members, the Cranbrook Recreation Integration

Committee. I agreed and consequently met members of this committee, many of whom were very interested in being interviewed for my thesis.

Throughout all of these interactions I took careful field notes in order to ensure that events and details were recorded in as accurate a manner as possible. These notes were usually recorded shortly after an event in which I was a participant observer. They included such information as the day, date, time, reason for, location and nature of the event, who attended, what the mood was, who I spoke to and what they said, and what was said among other persons. For example, after attending the Cranbrook Women's Centre's Christmas wine and cheese party, I recorded all of the above information, noting each person that I spoke with and what the general topic of conversation was, as well as recording specific comments that some of the person's made. I noted that one woman I spoke to had met another woman at the party through the Centre, then again at a local church. They had then formed a friendship and had come to the party together. The first woman had said to me that she found Cranbrook to be a very difficult place to meet friends and that for the first six months that she had lived in town, she had not met anyone. She had been very lonely and had felt isolated.

Many of the women that I spoke with in Cranbrook talked of the loneliness and isolation that they feel as residents of the community. The women reported finding friends to be difficult. Many said that Cranbrook is a 'cliquey' place, while others

looked for friends in agencies such as the many local churches and some other women's organisations such as the Women's Centre or the Beta Sigma Phi group. Exacerbating the feelings of loneliness felt by many of the women is that most do not have extended family in the community. Most had left their mothers or sisters in other towns in order to come to Cranbrook. This meant that a significant social, financial and emotional support was lost. The women not only reported feeling isolated from one another in the community, but also felt isolation from others between communities. In the winter, treacherous weather conditions make travel to see friends or relatives in other nearby towns very difficult, if not impossible. As well as thoughts on isolation, many other comments were recorded.

Usually, notes on participant observation were taken directly after the event. Sometimes though, the notes were not recorded until the following day. The importance of taking notes as soon after the event as possible was always kept in mind, as one's memory of specific events, comments, and conversations become significantly eroded as time goes by. At some events, such as a City Council meeting that I attended, it was possible to take detailed notes as the issues of the evening were addressed and the meeting proceeded. At this event, I recorded notes on the actual agenda that was given to me for the council meeting. I recorded who was in attendance and items of relevance to topics to which I had a particular interest. For example, one such item was the possibility of the implementation of a public transport system in the community.

4.3.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The majority of the data presented in the thesis is based upon semi-structured interviews. A great wealth of information came from the discussions about life in Cranbrook that I had with the participants, all of whom were females who ranged in age from twenty-three to fifty-five years. Potential interviewees were contacted through initial meetings made possible by the participant observation at the women's centre, the college and the recreation integration committee. A total of twenty-one women participated in the semi-structured interview. Of these women, eight had connections with the College as either students, faculty, or staff members. Eleven other women were involved in some capacity with the women's centre as either members, drop-in participants, or facilitators. The remaining four participants were involved with a recreation integration committee, most of whom served on the committee as volunteers and had part-time jobs during the day.

Of all of the women that I approached to arrange an interview, none refused. If anyone contacted me to be interviewed, as eight women did, I agreed to interview them. I would ask each person separately if they would like to be interviewed, explaining briefly what the interviews would be about. I was not exclusive in the manner in which I selected people. On one occasion, I was to meet three women at one of the women's houses for an interview. When I arrived at the woman's house, she explained that of the other two women, one

had forgotten to come and the other was unavailable. She had then asked two other women that she knew if they would like to participate. They agreed and came right over. We talked that afternoon for four hours and they seemed to enjoy the whole experience immensely.

The twenty-one women ranged in age from their twenties (four) to their forties and fifties (ten). The rest were in their thirties (seven). Of these women, six are divorced and single, eleven are married, one is divorced and has re-married, two are separated from their husbands, one is divorced and living common law, and one is single. Of these twenty-one women, three did not have children and eighteen had at least one child. Most of the women had two or more children. Despite the difficulties that I had in finding single women without children, I feel that a cross-section of age, marital status, class and existence of dependents in this group of subjects was found.

The majority of the initial interviews were tape recorded and were approximately one to four hours in duration. The first interviews were difficult for me. I had not had much experience as an interviewer and was afraid that the participants would not want to speak or would be as nervous as I was. I began each interview by explaining what I was doing at University and briefly how I decided to research this particular topic. I then explained the confidentiality of the interview. This was generally followed by the participants asking a number of questions about the study and about myself. Many were

interested, for example, in how I had managed to maintain two households, one in Edmonton, for University, and one in Cranbrook, for my family life, for the duration of the course. We would talk for awhile about the questions that they had of me and then we would slowly proceed into the semi-structured interview.

I had prepared some very brief notes as to topics that I wished to cover in the interview. However, I tried not to refer to these notes during the actual interview as I wanted the mood to be one of a conversation and not of a structured interview in which the participant was to speak and I was to ask questions. I wanted the whole mood to be much more casual, like a friendly conversation. Having no notes with me and recording no notes during the interview helped to create a relaxed mood. The tape recorder that I used on loan from the College library, was rather large and had an attached extra microphone. Before using it, I always asked for the participant's consent and then, upon receiving it, put the recorder under a table or chair to at least remove it from sight during the taping.

I feel that my skills as an interviewer greatly improved during the course of conducting all of the initial interviews. I learned to relax. I knew that the women who agreed to speak with me usually had a lot to say. I also learned that the interviewees did not have to tell me what I wanted to hear. Before I began, this was something that I thought they would simply have to do in order for me to come up with some insightful analysis. On the contrary, I learned that any

comment was valid and insightful and that many times things that were not said, or that were perhaps simply hinted at were terribly important pieces of information. For example, one woman who spent all her time with her three year old child was going off after the interview at three o'clock in the afternoon to have dinner with her child and then to go home to put him to bed. At this point she would usually retire as well, suggesting how her life had become almost inseparable from her child's. I also learned to glean a lot of information from the surroundings of the interview. One woman whom I interviewed wore a flowing caftan, and played some pleasant music at a loud volume. She was obviously very at home in her surroundings. Her home, not only the place of her domestic labour, was also her place of public work where she produced things for sale. She had the choice to work outside of her home doing the same job, but instead chose to be employed from her house. She enjoyed this very much. I came to understand how a participant's surroundings portrayed her own personal situation. This particular woman's surroundings portrayed her philosophy of life: unstructured, unhurried, comfortable, fulfilled, creative, casual and at peace with herself.

The topics covered in the initial interviews were broad and followed a chronological pattern. For example, I began most of the interviews by asking the participants something about their childhood. "Where did you grow up?" "What was your life like as a youngster?". Then we moved on to the teen years. "Where did you live when you were a teen?" "What do you remember about

this time of your life?". At this point, the conversation would follow into the individuals' adult lives. If, for example, a woman was heavily involved in a career for most of her life, that is what the conversation would centre on. If she met a man and married, that is what the discussion would concern. If her life had followed a different course, that is what we would talk about. So what would be discussed was, in effect, whatever was most important to the interviewee.

Other topics were consciously introduced into the conversation. Most importantly, if the person did not mention the topic of leisure, as was most often the case, it would be introduced for discussion. I would ask what general thoughts they had about it for themselves and others. Similarly, if the person did not mention her life in Cranbrook, I would bring up the subject. It was, however, only rarely that I would have to do this. Most of the women were very eager to talk about why they came to this community, what they thought about it, what they liked and disliked about it, what friends they have and what their lives are generally like here. At the end of the interview, I would ask the participant if there was anything in particular that she would like to discuss further, or anything that had not been discussed at all that she felt was worth mentioning. Most of the time, the women would respond to this question with suggestions for the study, comments about the worth of the study (all were very positive about the need for such research), and sometimes the women would confide something that was to be private, something which they were almost afraid

to tell me in case someone else would find out that they had said it. They would talk about such things as their views on religion, or on another woman's life, husband or family. It was obvious to me that these were private views that were very important to them. It was also important then that the interviewees trusted me, as an interviewer and a friend, not to disclose their views to others.

Although the preceding discussion on the semi-structured interviews may seem to indicate too much structure, they were, in actuality, very open. Occasionally, I would interview someone who needed no prompting whatsoever to say things about her life and her perspectives on many topics. These interviews would truly be like friendly conversations over coffee. However at other times, I would need to do more 'work' to make conversation and to guide it so that we talked about the issues of the study. For example, I often found that it was very difficult to turn the conversation to the issue of leisure. It seemed that leisure was simply not a meaningful concept to many of the women. In order to address this aspect of life then, it became necessary for me to talk about other things. Sometimes this would mean that we would talk about the person's day to day life, either here or from another place or time in their lives. Sometimes this would mean that we would use other words to replace leisure. Words such as 'happiness', 'joy', 'fulfillment', or 'wellness' were sometimes used to prompt the conversation. At other times, we would simply talk openly about how leisure did not fit into her life, and she might suggest

other things that made her 'feel good', 'feel happy' or 'smile' or 'laugh'. I always encouraged each participant's open responses. By the end of the interview process, I feel that I was able to put the respondents at ease, relate to them very well, facilitate open conversation and generally form good relationships with them.

4.3.4 UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

At the time that the majority of the data collection for this research project was being conducted, I had a job with the International Education department of the College. Part of my duties for this job was to go out into the community and talk to residents about taking international students into their homes for short and long term study programs. I conducted interviews in approximately forty homes in the community. This gave me an excellent opportunity to talk to women (the vast majority of the persons who were home when I called were women) about the community, their lives here, and their thoughts about women and leisure. Field notes were taken on these women's comments, thoughts, homes and lives, based on these conversations whose manifest purpose was something else.

4.3.5 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document analysis of the two organisations which were sources of the research population, as well as of local newspapers, was also conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the more public operations of the community. Documents, and related papers of East Kootenay Community College, the Cranbrook Women's Resource Society, the Corporation

of the City of Cranbrook, the Kootenay Advertiser and the Cranbrook Daily Townsmen was conducted throughout the research process. What this document analysis usually consisted of was watching the local paper for articles on those whom I had interviewed, or for articles of relevance to women's position in Cranbrook. I kept a separate file of clippings and pamphlets or imformation sheets disseminated by any of the above organisations to use as references for points of importance to women in Cranbrook. For example, I have kept the minutes of a Cranbrook City Council meeting in which transportation was discussed. On the sheet of minutes, I made notes as to the tone of the meeting and other points which I thought were relevant. As well, I kept clippings from the local papers on such things as the 'What's Happening? Calendar' and noted which items were of relevance to women, to men, as well as costs and times. I also collected items which I considered to be sexist or derogatory to women, or which I found to treat the women of Cranbrook as objects. Unfortunately, I found many such documents. Some, I have quoted directly from in this study and others I have used as background material.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data collected from the above mentioned techniques completed, I would like to refer to Armistead's (1974) discussion of participant-dialogue, as it is something which I have tried to foster in this research. The author states...

> "Ideally... the researcher should let people say what they want, and then follow up with specific questions. This should provide a record of what

> people wish us to know about their experience... Genuine trust and confidence are likely to exist only when the researcher fully explains the reasons for the research and those reasons are accepted by the subject. Such an outcome is more likely where the researcher is involved or identified in some way with those he is researching. In such circumstances of ongoing relationship and trust, it is also possible for the researcher to check that the account of experience offered is consistent with the person's social behaviour- where it is not, the actor can, without affront, be asked to explain the apparent discrepancy. Thus research can, and perhaps should, involve a two-way relationship..."(p. 120)

Being genuinely interested in the interview participants as persons is something that is very important to me. In this type of relationship, trusts were built and remain, to date, strong. The data collection process spanned a long period of time and I continue to consult with interview participants and others as to their thoughts or follow-up comments on such topics as did arise from the initial data analysis. For example, I facilitated a talk at the Women's Centre on the subject of the quality of life for women in Cranbrook almost a year after I began the initial data collection. I asked women participants to comment on this subject in relation to any aspect of their lives and well-being in which they cared to comment. We discussed the results of the study's initial data analysis to gain some responses to, and comments on it.

After initial material was collected via the above mentioned techniques, I followed Turner's (1981) approach to handling qualitative data. Turner advocates an approach in which researchers discover theory from their data. The author calls this the generation of 'grounded theory', and states

that... "the use of the grounded theory approach enable[s] researchers to develop their own theories in relation to the substantive area which they were studying, and encourage[s] them to use their creative intelligence to the full in doing so." (p.225)

4.4.1 ORGANISING COLLECTED DATA

The first step was to organise my field notes and take detailed notes on the semi-structured interviews. Due to the amount and length of the interviews, making detailed notes as opposed to transcribing the notes seemed to me to be more appropriate. I referred to the actual tapes many times in the course of writing this report. Often, referring to the actual tapes is something which I feel on occasion reveals more of the context and feeling behind a comment than a transcribed comment from a sheet of paper is capable of representing. After the notes had been organised into chronological order, with each page and paragraph receiving a letter and a number, I proceeded to make a second copy of all of the notes. I then had an original set and a copied set. The copied set of notes was then cut into pieces according to the different paragraph numbers. This resulted in the technique of having a letter and number system with, for example, the symbols "[E.81]" being present on one comment, and other letter and number symbols on other comments.

4.4.2 SATURATING THE STATEMENTS

After I had a rather large pile of completely divided notes I proceeded to develop categories from the cut out comments. I

then used the data to develop labelled categories which fit the data closely. At this stage for example, I had sorted the comments into many different piles which closely resembled a statement such as 'Motherhood is a lot of work' or 'I wish I had more friends here'.

At this point I accumulated examples of comments that fit into the categories, and noted links between the categories. In order to note the links, it was evident that I had to form a master sheet of comments by noting the above statements and writing down the numbers and letters of all comments which related to the statement. One entry on this master sheet would then resemble the following...

"8. 'Maintaining relationships with significant others required much transiency.' [A.19], [E.26], [J.2], [L.101], [B.16], [H.66], [N.221], [K.76], [T.320]..."

4.4.3 THE EMERGING THEMES

I noted that although the comments fit into separate but related categories, the categories could be grouped into different themes. The three themes that emerged from the linking of the categories move from the more concrete to the abstract. They are kinship and friendship relations, community relations, and leisure. Although these themes have some points which emphasize their separateness, they are all closely interrelated. Consequently, some points that are raised in one thematic area are repeatedly raised in others. Conversely, other points are not raised in more than one thematic area as they have been adequately covered.

4.4.4 CREATING A DIALECTIC BETWEEN STATEMENTS AND THEORY

These three themes and selected comments of which they are comprised were then linked to theoretical development in the feminist, family studies and leisure fields. By linking the data to theory at this stage, rather than imposing theory on the data in the first stage, grounded theory "... promotes the development of theoretical accounts and explanations which conform closely to the situations being observed, so that the theory is likely to be intelligible to, and usable by, those in the situations studied, and is open to comment and correction by them." (Turner, 1981:227) Linking the women study participants' statements to theoretical development in the social sciences creates an important dialectic between theory and action. For example, the three global themes which emerged from the data are kinship and friendship relations, community relations and leisure as a concept which does not at present represent women's lives. In each area, I have selected various authors' works to highlight and illustrate the words of the women interviewees and other observations that I made on life in Cranbrook. An important link has begun between the personal lives of the women of Cranbrook and the political issues as represented in the selected works of various social scientists. It is to this linking of the personal and the political that I will now turn.

CHAPTER 5.
KINSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP RELATIONS

5.1 THE RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Upon conducting content analysis of the twenty-one semi-structured interviews and the participant observation at the College, and the Women's Centre, three broad thematic areas emerged. These areas are familial and friendship relations, community relations and leisure. Although these themes have some points which emphasize their separateness, they are all closely interrelated. The data presented in this chapter reports some of the findings under the first broad thematic area of kinship and familial relations. Each of these two areas are discussed within the same 'theme' as they both involve the relational aspects of the women's lives and each has a profound affect on the other.

5.2 KINSHIP RELATIONS

Pogrebin (1987), in a discussion of the higher status that 'kin' receives in relation to 'friend', states that...

> "In my best of all possible worlds, the homemaker would have more social options but other workers would have more of what the homemaker has: a permeable membrane between the world of work, family, and friends. I welcome any sign of a breakdown between categories, be they racial or gender categories or the rigid dividing lines between the personal and professional aspects of our lives. Blurring these arbitrary lines helps us understand that, in reality, everything we do and feel is connected: If we're having friendship problems, it affects our work, and if we're having child care problems, it affects our friendships, and if we're feeling good in one arena, it spills over into the others." (p. 236)

The material dealing with familial relations has been

organized into three areas. The first of these documents the existence of separate realities for men, women, husbands, wives, boys, and girls. The second examines the work that is required of mothers within the family; and thirdly, the effects of transiency and physical mobility on the study participant's ability to sustain extended family relationships is explored. The material dealing with friendship relations has been organized into two areas. These two areas concern statements about the high degree of importance placed on good friendship relationships, and the existence of different circles of affiliation in the community. Before the discussion on data analysis begins, different aspects of the ideology of familism will be presented. The effects of such ideology will then be connected to the analysed data in the forthcoming sections.

5.3 'THE FAMILY'

5.3.1 THE IDEOLOGY OF FAMILISM

Luxton (1987) discusses how notions of 'the family' exist on two levels; the ideological and the practical. The author states that "... the 'family' exists in two quite distinct forms: as 'familialism', a widespread and deeply embedded ideology about how people ought to live; and as economic and social groups which in fact organize domestic and personal life."(p:238)

The ideology of familism profoundly affects our everyday lives and is based on a belief that there is one right way to live and that is in a nuclear family comprised of a heterosexual couple, normally with children. Fundamental to the ideology of

familism are patriarchal ideals of how men, women and children should live. 'The family' has historically been defined in relation to the male head of the family who is the breadwinner for the wife and children (Anderson, 1987). The ideology of the nuclear family supports male power over women and children and their consequent subordination to him. Familist beliefs assume that the more people live this 'norm', the more stable, nurturing and loving an environment will be (Spock, 1968). Conversely, the more people live in ways that deviate from the idealized system, the less likely they are to have love and stability and the more likely it is that they will be socially unstable (Riley, 1983). Beyond this, it is assumed that family structure greatly affects the broader society, and negatively so if people 'deviate' from the nuclear family model.

A critique of the ideology of familism is required. The myths that currently surround our notions of 'the family' need to be uncovered. We must develop an understanding of the meaning of 'the family' to people in everyday life and question why they have these beliefs. Only then will it be possible to challenge the ideology of the family and begin to formulate a more realistic picture that is representative of more people's experiences.

Luxton (1987) points out four specific problems with the academic use of the term 'the family'. Firstly, it assumes that there is one single phenomenon that is 'the family'. Despite vast changes in family structure historically, it is still viewed as a monolithic entity with the persons involved in the

structure having prescribed places, and uni-dimensional relationships (Anderson, 1987). Mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, single mothers and fathers, and all children are seen to behave in stereotypical ways.

Secondly, Luxton suggests that the ideology presents vastly different family forms as if they were, or should all be, the same entity. Members of societal 'institutions' such as the popular media, and the state, political, educational and medical systems tacitly support 'the ideological family' and in turn continue to shape forms of 'familism' in their procedures. For example, a recent issue of 'Chatelaine' magazine ran a story about Dr. Peter Hanson (the United States' 'guru' of stress reduction). The article shows us how, through family fitness, we can draw the family closer together. Detailing his own family's 'lifestyle', Hanson suggests that eating healthy meals, whizzing off to the family's ski chalet, playing in the backyard swimming pool, and working out on the exercise machines in the house will all tend to lessen stress and bond the family. His wife, "... takes two half hour walks per day pushing the baby pram." Meanwhile, his own contribution to family bonding is described as follows... "When it's the kids' bedtime in Toronto, I call home from wherever I might be in the world...My wife puts Kimberley and Trevor on the phone. For the next five minutes, I read a story as they hoot with laughter." (Barsky, 1989, p. 74-75). This is the way that every family ought to be, we begin to think. Reality becomes glossed over and popular belief assumes that an extended, immigrant family living in rural

British Columbia have the same life experiences as the white, middle-class nuclear family living in Toronto.

Thirdly, familist ideology tends to assume that all persons within 'the family' live similar lives, with the same resources and life choices. Lastly, the model of the nuclear family which is represented by family ideology comes to be seen as the norm, as if it actually exists in real life. Consequently, other forms of family structure are seen as deviant. In reality, the nuclear family as the norm is today a myth, as this form of family, with the mother as caretaker, father as breadwinner and their two or three children, no longer represents the majority (Eichler, 1983). The term 'the family' then "...both obscures reality and contributes to the maintenance of familial ideology, instead of recognizing the multiplicity of relationships and activities that are actually subsumed by the term." (Luxton, 1987:245)

The ideology of 'the family', then, assumes many things. Among other biases, it assumes that all family members experience similar life experiences, that housework and childminding are the 'natural' activities of wives and mothers (and that they are always 'happy' to do this work), and that although the relationship between the breadwinner and the economy is of primary importance this does not affect the geographic stability or the relationships of most family units. In a discussion on feminist theory and theorists, Code (1988) states that... "The starting point of feminist theory... is in the varied experiences of women, in the concrete situations

where they live and are disadvantaged." (p.19) This research then presents the perspectives of women residents of a hinterland community in relation to familist expectations, from their own points of view.

5.3.2 SEPARATE REALITIES

Code (1988) states that "...in patriarchal societies, women and men live different lives and have different experiences. Patriarchal societies are those in which men have more power than women, readier access than women to what is valued in the society, and, in consequence, are in control over many, if not most aspects of women's lives." (p.18) Upon analysis, it quickly became evident that family members experience very different lives based mostly on the amount of power that an individual is given within the family structure. Such comments as the following were indicative of a power imbalance...

"My brothers went to boarding school, the girls didn't go - they were trained in housekeeping skills." (A.36) 'A' is the oldest of eight children. A double-standard based on the sexual division of labour clearly existed, and this created separate realities for boys and girls. Even as a child, 'A' carried out some of the invisible emotional work around the smooth operation of the household. As the oldest child, she would often organise the other children in play. When the children wanted to prepare a skit or concert for the family, 'A' would plan, participate and stand in the background to whisper "Bow!" at the end, all the while making sure that they stood, looked and sang properly.

Another respondent, describing when she was growing up in

the Okanagan region of British Columbia indicated that realities were different for the different members of her family...

> "Mum always worked to raise the children. I don't remember her ever having any free time. There were four children in the family, three girls and one boy... his relationship was different with the family than anyone else's. The rules were different for him. He could go anywhere and do anything and mother or father never bothered him. He was treated as an outsider. Even to this day we three girls are closer." (H.63)

Even at young ages, then, the respondents recalled being treated differently and having different expectations put upon them by virtue of their gender. As they grew, the women's stories of being treated 'differently' became even more vivid.

As women, the study participants reported a different sense of lived experience from that of the men, and even other women who were in varied positions in society, in which they came into contact. Conforming to their husband's life was often considered to be a necessity and was a common characteristic of all of the women interviewees. Consequently, many of the women's comments echoed their thoughts and experiences of conforming to a male life.

One woman had come to the community with her young baby and her husband, who was on a teaching exchange program. She was enjoying the community, but stated that... "I miss my house and friends. It can be very lonely taking care of a baby who can't relate to you on an adult level. It can be depressing." (L. 45)

One woman had thought about the power relations which create different realities for men and women, and concluded that...

> "Religion really has slowed up the women's movement. It keeps them down,... emphasizes the traditional... the men make the decisions in the

> families. The woman's the caregiver... takes care of people's needs, but when there's a major decision - he makes it. The women can think, but they can't say what they think." (H.61)

Sometimes people from completely different backgrounds meet and marry. In one very poignant instance, a woman from a wealthy urban family met and married a man from a poor rural family. The differences in lived realities continued to the extent that the woman was forced to conform to the man's way of life. As the woman states...

> "My father was the head of a genetics group. He was a scientist and all of my parents' friends were professionals... doctors, lawyers, professors. There was a lot of formal entertaining when I was young. 'B's '[husband's] family was completely different. He came from a mining community. His family was poor. There were seven kids, with three sleeping in the same bed... hand-me-down clothes. Lots of bar drinking went on there." (E.86)

This woman now lives a life more similar to that which her husband is accustomed to. They live in a small community, and, although they are not poor, she complains that there never seems to be enough money for the things that she wants to do. She feels that there is always enough money however, for the hunting and fishing trips that her husband enjoys.

After talking for a while, she revealed a deep-seated discontent with which she had grappled with for years and because of which, she had decided to leave her family. She stated...

> "We have different lives, well... I don't have a life, but he wants to have his life here and I can't." (E.90)

This woman, so frustrated and depressed by trying to conform to ideological notions of the family, had failed only to

be happy while trying to meet the patriarchal expectations of kinship. For many years she had been a loving wife, and she adores her three children. However, the sacrifice that she was forced to make in order to live to the expectations of familism, had completely overcome her. She felt that there was nothing left of herself, and, worse yet, that no one in her family could relate to her situation or was grateful for her unending support throughout the years. The suspension of her life before marriage and of her friendships was made, while her husband continued to enjoy his traditional activities in which male friendship for him, was lived.

Another woman, when talking about paid employment, emphasized how difficult it can be to break down the different worlds that members of the same family can live in. "Working doesn't make things easier, but I think that my family treats me with more value because I absolutely insist that they help me out and I think that they respect me more (when I work). I wonder sometimes if they do..." (H.66) Feeling that if she conforms more to the traditional male model of working in the public sphere, she would command more respect from her children, she is frustrated when this does not happen. As she is the children's mother, and she is a member of a fairly traditional family, she is expected to meet the caring needs of her family before her own personal or economic needs. Her husband has told her before that because she works, it puts the family in a higher tax bracket. In essence, he would then prefer that she not work outside of the home.

Familist ideology is clearly lived out in this family. No matter what action the woman takes, she is constrained by her gender. It is considered natural that she will do all of the household chores and care and nurture her family, even at the expense of herself. If she pushes herself too hard in either her public or domestic work places, all of her work suffers. She may be tired and distant at her paid employment or she may neglect some of the many details required of motherwork. All of this leads to added pressure and stress on herself. The ideology of familism would support that she maintain her family first, and her 'outside' interests last. The truth may be that her outside interests are actually her real interests and chances to foster her own self.

The patriarchal expectations of kinship for women are also present in the day to day life of the community. Many women reported that the male dominated functioning of the community and its extreme conservatism vastly affected their happiness here. One participant described herself as having resigned herself to live in Cranbrook as her husband gained steady employment here. She mentions that they have bought a nice house and that although he enjoys the community, she does not. Even though she had grown up in a small rail-town, she does not like Cranbrook as a place to live because she feels that it is 'red neck', that there is too much hiring on a religious and nepotistic basis and that it is hard to break the 'old boy network' in such a male dominated place.(S. 128)

Besides having to shape their lives to fit others', the

study participants often expressed an awareness of a strict gender differentiation that profoundly affected their lives.

This gender differentiation takes many different forms for the women study participants, as the following comments indicate....

> "Mum was from Vancouver, Dad was from a farm. They moved to the middle of Prince George. Dad became paranoid- he wouldn't let us kids walk to school on our own, it was only three houses to the school! We kids became stifled. We had to come home from school right away, there was no recreation. Well, I might have been able to read occasionally, but mostly we all had to play outside where Dad could see us. I didn't like it. Mum worked (outside of the home) so I worked a lot, being the oldest. I made all the breakfasts and lunches and started dinner. My brother got to go wherever he wanted because he was a boy. My life was chores, school and homework... Father was very strict. We had no freedom." (E. 34)

When this same woman grew up, she lived with a boyfriend in a town called Valemont. She began to work at a place run by a group of men. On her first day of work, her boyfriend visited her place of employment. He confronted the men who worked there and, pointing to 'E', said "That is my wife. She is mine. Don't pinch her, leave her alone. She's mine." (E. 34) 'E' said that she liked how her boyfriend watched out for her in situations like that and that, as a result, she never had a 'hassle' with the men.

It is evident, from this woman's description of her life, that when she was young, she had a distinct part to play in the smooth operation of her family, because of her gender. When she grew older, these expectations did not change. She was treated as a nurturer in her family and when she left home to live with

a boyfriend, those expectations did not change. She was treated as someone who needed others to speak for her in the public world; as an object. As Code (1988) states, "Women's lack of of equality in public life is exacerbated by oppressive sexual standards according to which they are viewed as sex objects, and hence limited in their freedom to move about in society." (p. 35) 'E' colluded in subtly different forms of control and 'ownership' when she lived with her boyfriend than when she was responsible for taking care of her brothers and sisters when she was young. However, she moved from the strict control of her father to 'ownership' by her boyfriend. Never feeling happy with these arrangements, 'E' eventually left her boyfriend and her constrained family life behind only to find single motherhood more of a struggle than she had imagined.

Other comments also supported the contention that the different realities of men's and women's lives are based on notions of gender differentiation in labour and life. "Dad was very masculine, he did the tough jobs... he drove, my Mum didn't." (M. 110) "My Mum cooked and cleaned a lot. And I remember she liked to sew." (M.111)

The existence of such a strong differentiation between persons based on their gender often results in communication difficulties. On the difficulty of open communications between husbands and wives, often to the point where separate worlds were built, a participant stated... "We've gone to marriage counselling to improve our communications, but he still doesn't have a clue as to what I want." (E.92) Many women reported

living with a man with whom they could not communicate for many years. With no love in their relationship, the women would carry on 'for the children'.

When asked if she thought that things were changing in terms of social roles for women, another participant replied..."No. Traditional roles will still be mostly the same in the future, but things are gradually changing. For my sons, I don't care because they're alright under this system, but for my daughters, I care." (H. 60) Echoing an understanding of the increased freedom of choice and opportunity to develop themselves that males enjoy in the patriarchal kinship system, this woman feared for the well-being of her daughters. She was very afraid that her daughters, whom she feels are raised in a manner in which they will become self-assured and confident in the public world, will only be confronted by familist assumptions and end up with the lack of support that she receives in her own present situation. The implications of familism, where all persons in the family are seen to lead similar lives, is not a reality for this woman and for many of the other respondents.

As well as conforming to their husband's lives, and noticing a strict gendered division of work and life, the study participants felt marginalized if they did not adhere to the nuclear family model. McDaniel (1988) states that... "Contrary to public belief, fewer than 5 per cent of women receive alimony after divorce. With childcare responsibilities (and limited day care facilities), limited job opportunities and, all too often,

inadequate or non-existent child support, divorced women often find themselves among the ranks of the poor. A 1986 report of the National Council on Welfare of Canada found that families headed by women (most single parent families) run over four times the risk of poverty as families headed by men." (P. 114) What often results from not conforming to the model is poverty, a feeling of powerlessness and a consequent search for acceptance. Several comments were noted by single mothers in this regard.

Expressing her dismay at the isolation and feelings of marginalization that she felt as a single mother, a participant stated... "When you're a single parent people tell you that you're raising your kids wrong... nothing (you do) is right. It undermines your authority. It's frustrating and hard to cope. Welfare is a hard pill to swallow. I find that the church is comforting."(E. 45)

'BE', a woman who has been separated from her husband for a number of years and is raising six children from age nineteen to thirty-four, stated that she had just started to do things for herself in the past couple of years. "For so many years I gave everything to my husband and my kids... I felt like I was living in a cage. But now (referring to coming into Cranbrook from an outlying area where she lives) I get out of the cage more often." (Be. 141)

When asked what she would like to do in her life, another study participant who is also a single mother replied, "I would want a good man, [and] a house in the country, with a garden.

I'm not a career type. I would want this guy to support 'M' (her son) and me. (Br. 157) Indicating the dependence that she feels on men, even if she is not with one, this woman voices a lack of power in her present position.

It is evident that, contrary to familist ideology, men, women, boys and girls live very different realities based on their gender, their personal situations, their general power and their level of control over decision making. Many women reported powerful stories, all illustrative, in one way or another, of the effects of familist ideology and the enduring constraints it has constructed in their lives. In an attempt to cling to ideological assumptions, many women sacrificed their own needs and selves. Others, pushed to abandon this system, are single mothers who feel that they live in poverty and shame for not adhering to the assumptions. All of the women live with frustration, feeling that no matter what they do they are not fulfilled. Many were reluctant to talk of this frustration at first, not wanting to be reminded of the constraints under which they live and feeling that there is no way out. However, throughout the course of the interviews, their stories would eventually emerge as the women sought to understand their constraints. They gained solace in the fact that all of the other women had similar stories of their own.

5.3.3 MOTHERHOOD AS WORK

Domestic labour includes such tasks as overseeing a home and caregiving to all who occupy it. It involves cleaning, cooking, care of children, the disabled, the sick or elderly and

a plethora of emotional and relational work (Luxton, 1980). Ultimately, domestic labour is the primary responsibility of women (Oakley, 1976). It is usually considered to be a private and individual matter for which the women doing it receive no pay. As the ideology of familism supports the male breadwinner ethic, it implies that a natural and traditional function of women is to give care to others and to do domestic labour.

Rosenberg (1987) states that defining mothering as work is essential as it is...

> "...very important for women to realize that what they are doing is work. When I talk to women, I consciously change the language I use. I talk about the job and the fact that the woman is the manager. That's one of the hardest parts about the job and it usually isn't even recognized as work- even by husbands who are 'nice guys' and 'help' (with housework and childcare). They don't seem to realize that helping is not the same thing as carrying the weight of responsibility that mothers carry." (P. 186)

The comments of the women in this study, on domestic labour and the responsibility of being a wife, mother, or single-mother, do not support the ideology of the 'happy housewife'. On the contrary, most of the women viewed their work in the home as being under valued, never-ending and thankless. They were eager to discuss it.

Even when a couple had no children, the woman would work very hard in the home. One such woman described living with a man who worked at a sawmill...

> "I would get up at 6:00 A.M. to make breakfast, he would get up and gripe because it was so early. Then he'd go (to work) and I'd make homemade bread and perogies... something really special for dinner. All of my housework would be done by 10:00 A.M. so I would get together with a neighbor for coffee. Before I met her, I'd just work in the

> house all day. When he came home I'd have a hot bath ready for him. I'd wash his dirty work clothes right away because I'm allergic to the sawdust. We'd have dinner and I'd clean up and that was about it." (E.41)

Another commented...

> "I realized how much work raising a family was for my mother when I had to do it for myself. When I was married, I was responsible for all the household responsibilities that my mother had done for me. We (husband and her) were both working full-time... All your inequalities don't really bother you until you're in the position where you can't change them. It was when I had kids that it really bothered me that I had full responsibility for them... I did it because we both came from very traditional families - you never complained, ...mother didn't." (H.63/65)

Emphasizing the points that these two women raised, Rosenberg (1987) states that...

> "Unwaged caregiving in the household is rarely recognized as either a contribution to social reproduction or as real work: rather, it is seen in essentialist biological terms for women and as a private and personal reward for waged work for men.... Furthermore, for women who do the work of caregiving there are contradictions between the low status of the work they do and the seemingly high status of the role. 'Mother', 'motherhood', and 'mothering' are words that bring forth flamboyant, extravagant, romantic images. In contrast, the work itself includes many tasks which are not socially respected. Motherwork involves dealing with infant bodily functions: people who clean up human wastes have low status. Few jobs have this contradiction so deeply ingrained." (p. 188)

Consequently, feelings of loneliness, isolation and a dislike of constant housework were frequently expressed by participants.

'E' is not particularly fond of living in a smaller centre. She spends most of her time cleaning the house and looking after her family. She feels that at least on weekends

they should all do something together. However her interests are very different from her children's, who are in their early teens, and her husband's. If they go off on weekends to do what they want without her, she feels deep frustration and resentment. "The housework has been completely my own. I hate it and especially on weekends when my family is going out the door." (E.100)

The same woman stated that she didn't have any friends anymore. "I was 'Supermom' for so long that it took its toll. Then the mental illness came and they (the friends) left. I'm driven like my Dad, he was my role model." (E. 88) However, in this situation, the woman's father, a chemist, and a cross between a 'mad scientist and an absent-minded professor', was quite brilliant and eccentric. He would always be busy working on some project. 'E', also very motivated and involved in art, experienced periods of depression after marriage due to a lack of control and the inability to continue her art work with the increasing demands of household and motherhood duties.

Some of the women respondents who work outside of their homes had arranged to hire a person who would complete some of the household chores that they felt responsible for, but did not or could not do. The full-time working mother of a handicapped child, 'R' found balancing the demands of work and home to be too much. "I have someone come in once a week. It makes it easier. It was tough to pay someone to come in and do it. (the housework) I have someone come in thirty five hours a week to help with 'D' (her child) and I realized that I was paying her

half of my salary to come in. There's no guilt involved. Others would feel guilty but it is pure heaven, I'd recommend it to anyone." (R.117) Shortly after this interview took place, this woman quit her job as her child's health had worsened. With the lack of extra funds coming in from her employment, the paid help may have had to be stopped. Although paying someone to come in to do domestic labour may seem an easy answer to women's disenchantment, not all women can afford this service or even get the permission of their husbands for it. As well, many women feel guilt about not fulfilling their motherhood role, a role in which one's love for others is expressed. The caring and service functions of domestic labour are inextricably bound (Ungerson, 1983).

In terms of domestic labour, the women all worked more in the home than their husbands or partners. Two women in one interview said that they liked being single, but said that it was difficult to afford to be on their own with children and that they did not like the treatment they received from other members of the community due to their situations. They still preferred being single though and liked just having to take care of themselves. Having a man around, for them, also meant having to take care of him. (B.151) Finding single women over the age of twenty-five without children for the study was difficult. It is considerably more difficult to find women over this age who are single and without children, than are married and with children. It seems that the majority of women in Cranbrook over this age are mothers, most of them being married. This perhaps

reflects the fact that most women come here in order to maintain a relationship with a man or, with a few exceptions of course, they do not come here at all.

Another woman, describing her husband's contribution to the smooth operation of the household, said that she found it frustrating that he would physically do chores or activities with their child if she initiated them, but he would not emotionally involve himself. For example, he might physically take the child to the sitter, but would not remember to tell the sitter how the child was feeling; that the child was tired or a little under the weather that day. She believed that he would do things physically, but not emotionally and only if she initiated the task and told him exactly what to do. (S.129) The implications of the ideology of familism in this case ensure that, no matter what mother does in her professional life, she is ultimately responsible for the care and nurturance of the family members. This leads to increased pressure on the mother not to pursue her own life choices, as this will only be done at the expense of herself and her family. The situation, at present, is very bleak.

'H' expressed frustration at being home after doing a rewarding job that ended bitterly due to politics beyond her control. When not working, she found that all she did was clean. "All I do is clean. I'm so sick of it, I could just scream!" Describing her work in the home as a never-ending cycle, she did say that she really enjoyed doing jobs that had a beginning and an end. Consequently, she liked to do projects

like wallpapering a room and working on the garden. Yet, she says that her husband takes on all of the jobs that have a beginning and an end. "I feel bitter about that. He tells me I never finish anything but it's because I never have the time to finish something." She finds that she is constantly interupted by her four children. (H.70) Familist assumptions suggest that a woman should be 'pleased' to do the work of keeping family members together. This work involves cooking, cleaning, nurturing, and generally infusing all of her actions around her family with caring and loving acts. After four children and many years spent trying to pursue a teaching career, this woman is highly stressed. She is torn between familist assumptions, where she is supposed to be more than fulfilled by her tasks as a mother, and reality, where she is bitter and frustrated with her life and the constraints which are put upon it.

Many women took work in to their homes in an effort to increase their family's income and often to decrease the isolation of being with small children all day. Work in the home can take on many varied forms. Some of the study participants took work such as babysitting into their homes or sold cosmetic, weight loss, kitchenware or children's products from their houses.

'E' had started a day care in her home many years ago. The idea evolved from when she used to babysit neighbourhood children in her home. She describes herself as an 'ex-supermum' who is now emotionally exhausted. She enjoyed the day care for the first while but wasn't enjoying it ten years later at the

time that I interviewed her. It was a very financially rewarding operation. "I made a lot of money doing it. It made it tough to say I'm not doing it anymore. I feel very guilty - I seem to be cutting off everybody's life in my family (by not continuing the day-care service)." (E.89) Voicing the strong guilt and frustration at not being able to continue carrying the weight of the 'supermom', who not only cares for her family but also brings in a large income without leaving her home, 'E' has sacrificed her health and well-being. Now, completely exhausted and unable to carry on this spiralling responsibility, she feels as if she has failed. The implications of familism for 'E' meant sacrificing her very self for the needs of her family. Her family, unable to understand why 'E' was so frustrated, carried on with their own interests while 'E' sunk into a deep depression.

In our present patriarchal kinship system, it is understandable why the husbands and children of women do not see the sacrifices that mothers make in order to ensure their family's happiness. The ideology of familism has the effect of making mother's tasks invisible. In reality, mothers, such as 'E' and many others, work around the clock. One of the speaker series' presentations at the local women's centre was on children's art. The speaker, a local artist, demonstrated different kinds of artwork that could be done relatively inexpensively and creatively in the home. The women participants were very interested in this and learned how to make decorations for the house, sun-catchers for the windows,

book covers, and embossed cards to do with or sometimes for their children. (N.6) Although it may be seen to be 'Children's Art' it is in actuality 'Mother's Work', for without mother, it would not happen. It is then all 'work' that is required of mothers; all 'work' that is largely invisible and seen to be mother's 'leisure' (Deem, 1986).

Asked what they would do if they could have any life choices, the women's responses were varied but had many commonalities.

'S' said that if things could be anyway that she wanted them to be, she would live in a city and work part-time. However, she stated that she would only take on a job if it was a one that she really loved and where she was treated well. She would also have more support from her husband and more help in raising the children, as she wanted "more time for myself." As well, she wanted a nanny. On second thought however, she didn't believe in having others raise her child. (S.139)

Others stated that they wanted more help with the housework, more job opportunities, more time to themselves that they did not have to feel guilty about, and that they wanted to feel less guilty in general about complaining about their situations. Some felt that it was bad to complain, they felt as if they just 'bitched' all the time and wondered what the use was anyway. They feel that no matter what they say, nothing will change in the end.

The respondents reported, then, that motherhood requires overseeing a home and care-giving to all who occupy it and that

these activities are primarily the responsibility of women. Some of the women supported the ideology of familism where it is natural and traditional for women to give care to others and to do domestic labour. More women, however, questioned this. Although they carried out their tasks of caring and nurturing and cleaning, they were frustrated by the lack of support they received. They felt isolated and neglected in their homes and wanted to break down the public/ private constructs by socialising more or gaining outside employment. They did not want the activities that went on within their homes to be considered private and completely separate from the public. As one woman stated... "When I had my second child, I felt like my door was nailed shut. Now it's better. I've found a friend in the building and we do our housework together. It's way better that way. Together, we laugh and talk and share the work..." (W.C. 300) In reality then, women's sentiments about the dominant ideology of familism are far from positive.

5.3.4 SPACE AND PHYSICAL MOBILITY

> If the [Canadian] dream of social mobility has met its historical limits, it has perhaps appropriated physical mobility as a substitute, incessant movement that returns everyone to the same place.(Cerullo and Ewen, 1984: 40)

In a study on family camping, Cerullo and Ewen (1984) examined the politics of space in relation to a camping organization in New England. They discovered that many of the people who camped with the organization felt that the activity offered an escape from the demands of jobs that structured family life. It also symbolically suggested a time when

families lived a different kind of life. The campers believed that "Real families, as they lived in people's imaginations, and particularly as women envisioned them, were families in which men and their work stayed closer to home."(p:40)

During the interview process, it became evident that geographic mobility had two major effects on the women participants' lives. Firstly, geographic mobility has multiple effects on relationships. Secondly, urban geography 'normally' distances real family life from familist ideology in a number of ways.

Many of the women in this study reported feeling isolated in their jobs as mothers and housewives. As well, geographical mobility has separated many of them from the support of mothers, sisters and friends, and constant moves characterize many of their lives.

Many of the study participants feel constrained by their limited access to spaces within and outside the community. The fact that Cranbrook has no public transportation system, makes it very difficult for women who do not own cars to get out of their houses and around town. The women who do have cars obviously find mobility within the city to be adequate but often wish for the time and money to go to cities such as Spokane and Calgary to do shopping and attend cultural events. All of the women were in agreement that services in these other cities are superior and that they felt isolated in Cranbrook at times.

Forming a close relationship with a man often meant moving from one town to another. The degree of transiency among the

women I interviewed is considerable. All of the women have lived in several locales in British Columbia and places beyond. The reasons for the moves is almost always the result of relations with a man. He would either be transferred to a job, lose a job, gain a job, or have relatives in a particular community. The woman would go with him and find herself in a strange new community. It would be expected that a new life would begin. Women who are not attached to a man sometimes move to the community because they feel it is safe and a good place to raise children. However, it is seldom the women's job prospects, or to be near the women's family or friends, that is the occasion for a move.

'E' commented that when her husband graduated from College,...

> "there was no work so we lived in one teeny tiny little village on Vancouver Island after another. We lived in Lake Cowichan for two years. I remember that pretty well [as] all there was in the town was a bowling alley and a grocery store... I hated bowling."(E.90)

Her husband got his first 'real' job in Ashcroft and Cache Creek. It was a job that was jointly sponsored by both communities and they found that due to political reasons, they had to live in one community and then the other during their two year stay there. It was a difficult job and 'T' spent a lot of extra time at work in order to do a good job. He was very dedicated to his work at that time. However, this was a difficult time for 'E'...

> " 'T' never came home from work, he was very dedicated. I lost a baby there [miscarriage] and also had to have a gall bladder operation. I had very few friends there, actually no friends for the

> first time in my life. I started to get very depressed... I was alone a lot. 'T' was out so much with work and I was stuck in the house.(E.90)

They next lived in a tent in a campground for three months as her husband was unemployed. "I didn't mind that so much because at least we were together," 'E' commented. They then moved to a cabin for a year in the Okanagan region of British Columbia where her husband had found work once again. 'E' began to feel quite isolated and found that she always had to have something in the form of a project to do to keep her mentally and physically active. The couple's last move was to Cranbrook, approximately ten years ago. Due to problems that 'E' has experienced in this community though, she has decided to move to Victoria to be with her mother. She is hoping that, by doing something on her own and for herself, she will be able to regain a part of her that she feels has been lost in her efforts to care for her children and husband. She feels a lot of guilt and anxiety at her decision to move, saying that " I have mixed feelings about it. 'T' and I, we've had some problems, but we still really care about each other. We have communications problems. We have different lives, well... I don't have a life, but he wants to have his life here and I can't." (E.90)

Other women describe equally physically mobile lives and a sense of a life in which many possibilities for joy are foreclosed (or sacrificed), because they are lived in alien circumstances...

> "After high school, I worked for two years in Vancouver. I went to University, became a teacher and moved to Kitimat to teach. That's where I met my husband. We travelled around the world for a year. His family had a family estate in Jaffray.

> He loved it there, so I said 'O.K.'. So we came. After eight years, we moved to town because our kids have some special needs and it was easier. I didn't have much in common with people in Jaffray." (R.113)

'A' grew up in England and came to Canada for what she thought was only going to be two years, twenty seven years ago. She had a brother in Vancouver, so she went there first, then got a job in Mission and was sent for another job to Chetwynd. That is where she met her husband. He is from Fernie. So they married in Chetwynd and then moved to Cranbrook twenty two years ago for him to take a job and also to be closer to his parents in Fernie. (A.33)

'C', a single mother, talked of moving back to a community where her ex-husband, the father of her children, now lives. Feeling the pressure of living a life not in accordance with the ideology of familism, 'C' needed support from someone. Even though her relationship with her ex-husband was ended and he had beat her when they were married, 'C' still felt that he represented a home life. Moving away from Cranbrook and to where 'J' lived would mean that... "the kids will be able to spend more time with their father, I'll have more of a sense of home than I do here and then I'll feel like building something.... Hopefully, I'll look for work."(C.19)

At a talk that I facilitated at the Women's Centre on May 25, 1988 the subject of physical mobility was raised by the study participants in the conversation. Of the eight women there that day, all of them had come to Cranbrook from other towns. None of the participants had grown up and remained in

one place for the majority of their lives and most had lived in several other communities before coming to this one, usually because their partner had found work here. (WC.5)

Not one of the interview participants expressed moving to the community for reasons solely to do with themselves. Although some women do move to the community to gain employment for themselves or because they simply enjoy the community and its environs, the majority move for reasons which usually have to do with family.

A typical comment is then... "We came here because it's good for the family... it's got lakes... the size is not too big or too small... it's far enough away from [extended] family, but sometimes close enough. It would be nice to have more support from [extended] family..." (M.112)

The experience of physical mobility had a different quality when done for themselves as adults than when done for husbands or other significant people in their lives. It was often experienced as freedom and joy. For example, the women indicated that they had more opportunity to develop themselves as persons before the commitment of marriage and children then than they do now.

"I used to like to visit with people, read, go shopping and touring around the city when I first went to the city for University. I liked to go to plays and cultural activities... Now, there's no time for me..."(H.64)

"I used to go to the opera... now all there is is hunting and fishing. I feel guilty if I don't let them do what they

(family) want. There always seems to be money for hunting trips, but none to go to the opera in Spokane..." Describing what her plans were for an anticipated move from the community without her family, 'E' expressed interest in resuming art classes that she had taken before she was married. "When I'm gone, I'd like to take art classes, learn to type... to use a computer... go to Australia, I've always wanted to do that, ... maybe open a business!" (E.95)

A world in which more people are free to experience life to the level of their own needs is possible and desireable and can not happen if we are forced to believe that there is only one proper way to conduct our lives. In the words of 'E'... "This study your doing sounds good. Studying women with kids is good. If you could help women to be more aware... to do more things for themselves... You know when I told my doctors that I was going to leave here, they said 'You take your problems with you!' and 'It won't be different in the city'. But now I don't look at it that way. It's a new beginning." (E. 97/103)

5.4 FRIENDSHIP RELATIONS

It became obvious through discussion with the interview participants that maintaining good relationships with family and friends is very important. Although the benefits of friendship vary according to the individual, all of the women agreed that having friends here played a key role in their sense of well-being. Having a strong affiliation with another person or group of persons basically makes the women feel good. The material dealing with friendship relations has been organized

into two areas. These two areas concern statements about the high degree of importance placed on good relationships and the existence of different circles of affiliation in the community.

5.4.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Women consider friendship with others to be very important, then, as they are raised to get pleasure from giving to others and to gain external approval.

Gilligan (1981) writes...

> "...relationships, and particularly issues of dependency, are experienced differently by women and men. For boys and men, separation and individuation are critically tied to gender identity since separation from the mother is essential for the development of masculinity. For girls and women, issues of femininity or feminine identity do not depend on the achievement of separation from the mother or on the progress of individuation. Since masculinity is defined through separation while femininity is defined through attachment, male gender identity is threatened by intimacy while female gender identity is threatened by separation. Thus males tend to have difficulty with relationships, while females tend to have problems with individuation." (p.8)

When asked what is important in her life, one respondent stated "...I would like to have more close relationships, better friendships, and a good challenging job. A goal to work toward... I don't like drifting." (N.80) The importance of good relations with her daughter is very important to this respondent. "I'm very upset about communicating with my daughter. The communication is poor. I'm starting to get mad about it." (B. 141) Showing the importance of friendship in her life, another woman stated ..."If I could have anything? I'd want to be rich... and have more opportunity for socialness--- because I'm often lonely."(B. 148)

Friendship is something that is important to work very hard at obtaining...

> "You need to make a concerted effort to find friends, you have to actively pursue them, they're not going to come to you. We have a few good friends but they come and go." (R.118)

> "It's a big time commitment... it's much easier to stay at home and not see anyone, at the end of the day, you're exhausted and its easier to spend time with the kids. I treasure friendships, its hard work though..." (M.118)

A prime criterion of a good friendship seemed to be reciprocity and caring. Many of the women stated that they wished that they had more relationships of this kind...

> "I have a few friends here, not many. My definition has changed... a mutually supportive relationship. Before it was being with people who had qualities you wish you had. The people that I've found as friends here have disclosed equally what I have. They've displayed the same amount of humanness as I have and that is really important to me." (C.17)

> "We don't do much in Cranbrook. Now that my husband's switched jobs. He used to have a lot of friends in the mine but in his new office, the people are older and very conservative and it just doesn't fit. We don't have a lot of friends here. It's hard. We had three groups of really good friends but now they've left. The friends I've had here have been good friends but it's hard to make friends and then keep them." (N. 77)

> "It's easy to make casual friends for work but good friends, it's hard to find." (N. 78)

> "Its pretty transient here- there are 'peripheral friends', they know they're leaving. Then there's nuclear groups like the churches have." (N.53)

Many insightful comments were made by women who did not feel that they belonged to any particular group or even had

formed a strong relationship with another person.

"One by one my friends have gone away, I guess I'm hard to be around. I get really emotional but I hold everything inside. I've gotten to the point where I can't help 'B' or the kids anymore." (E.93)

5.4.2 DIFFERENT CIRCLES

Most of the women are aware of the existence of 'different circles' of persons in the community based on affiliations. There are one hundred and five different clubs and organisations in town according to an information list published by the Cranbrook Public Library. The persons involved with these groups have many different types of skills, abilities, afflictions, and/or desires in common. There are groups for those interested in amateur radio, computers, sports, crafts, languages, music, dance, cars, animals, airplanes and more. Most of these groups are exclusive in that you need to be of a particular gender (the Kinsmen Club), to have yourself or have an interest in a particular health problem (Alcoholics Anonymous, Weightwatchers, Arthritis Society), to have a special skill (Music Teacher's Association), status in the community (Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce), educational level (University Women's Club), be of a particular religious denomination (Christ the Servant Catholic Women's League), or have a certain amount of expendable income in terms of cash or necessary equipment (Soccer Club, Snowmobile Club, Computer Club) in order to gain entry into these potential sources of affiliation with others.

However, the abundance of interest groups in town does not

indicate a high degree of homogeneity amongst townspeople and, pointing to the segmentation of life in Cranbrook, a study participant states that ..."All of my friends come from different groups. They're in their own nuclear groups. Sharing and caring in friendships is great because you need support. But I know if all my friends got together, they wouldn't like each other." (N. 54)

Many others found support through a particular group such as the Church... "Meeting friends and doing things with family is very important. We find fellowship in the Church group we go to. It's very supportive and warm, a relaxed place. Being with people who really care about you and really caring about them is what's most important." This woman had had a baby in Cranbrook. However, her shipment of baby clothes didn't arrive until six weeks after the birth... "But everyone in the church gave me things. All these wonderful things. There was another family that didn't have food or presents and the church gave them boxes of things. They also gave me a beautiful baby shower. I'll never forget it."(L. 44C)

Affiliation with a group was seen to be a basic need to be fulfilled, and even though maintaining the affiliation required a lot of work on the part of the women, it was seen to be so important that some wondered what they would do without it.

Indications of an awareness of different circles of people in the community was often expressed. These groups were not just formal organisations, but could also be a group of individual persons who came together due to having something in

common. Women formed friendships with those who shared a common philosophy of how to raise their children, a common style of life, or because their husbands worked together.

I lead a discussion on women and leisure at the women's centre. There were about seven women in attendance. "It's safe for my kids and mine can participate in any recreational thing here," said one woman, commenting on how she liked the community. Other women protested that these recreational opportunities all cost money and if you did not have much money, their kids could not participate. They felt that this was too bad for the children and made them, as mothers, feel guilt and that their children were being labelled as lower class. When the discussion turned to friendship, all of the women felt that Cranbrook was very 'cliquey'. "It's very hard to get to know people here." "I found that new people that I would meet would just want something from me. They would use me to sell Avon to or to babysit their kids. But if I ever asked them for anything? No way!" (W.C. 5) Having tried to form good relationships with others but finding that the others just wanted to use them for some reason, many of the women are cautious about who they associated with.

5.4.3 THE WOMEN'S CENTRE: FINDING FRIENDS AND BREAKING BOUNDARIES

The women's centre is an organisation in which you need no special skills, interests, level of education, or particular status to join. Men, women and children are welcomed equally there. Due to this open door policy, the women's centre does not attract those persons to whom exclusivity is important. The

average member of the centre is female, with children and not having a high degree of status in the community. Although some women who attend the centre have a high degree of education, and steady, well-paying jobs, most do not. The women who run the centre express some dismay with the fact that the centre serves mainly this one segment of society and would like to have a more varied clientele while still serving the needs of those who require their services the most. Although the workers at the Centre are not sure if it is possible for all the women of Cranbrook to come together in an effort to raise the quality of life for women here, they would very much like for it to happen. This aspiration comes from a belief that in order for women to improve their positions in town, there must be collective action on the part of a significant proportion of Cranbrook women.

At present, the Centre's clientele seems divided, with the less privileged women coming to programs mostly for social interaction and the more privileged women coming as speakers or leaders of programs. Programs are more social in nature and involve learning how to arrange flowers or provide children's art. Conversely, the speakers who present these programs are rarely seen at the centre socializing or as clients of other programs. The dividing line is thus set. The speaker series presentations on one morning a week are, however, a good way to bring women in to the centre who would not normally attend. Those who come in to give presentations, those who attend out of particular interest in the topic, and those who just like to

meet with people or talk to others are all given the opportunity to mix, if they feel comfortable doing so. The program offerings do give women in town the opportunity to break down some of the often expressed isolation in their lives.

I first went to the Women's Centre on Wednesday April 20, 1988 to attend a drop-in speaker series program. I met 'S' and 'J', who run the centre. They introduced me to five other women who attended that day. 'A', the speaker, spoke on women in non-traditional occupations. She is the area's fish and wildlife officer. The group of women was small enough that many women openly discussed women's issues surrounding inequality in work and the home.

The next week, a group of about ten women gathered to talk and listen to a local woman plant and garden specialist. Most of the women bring their children to the centre and while one of either 'S' or 'J' looks after them, the other introduces the speaker and facilitates the talk. It is a very comfortable and non-threatening environment. There are, however, many interruptions from children coming over from the play area to see what's going on with their mothers, the speaker or the other women. One day, a public health nurse, 'L', spoke on women and Aids. Instead of a lot of discussion on Aids, many questions were asked of the speaker about women's health in general and, due to the fact that the speaker was eight months pregnant, more talk and questions were specifically asked about pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood.

The College, a much larger organisation than the Women's

Centre, serves the diversified educational, employment and social needs of thousands of community and area residents. It is consequently less personal and more divided. Of the interview sample population that are affiliated with the College, none are full-time permanent workers there. This is indicative of the position of many of the female faculty members who work on a part-time basis. The vast majority of support staff members are female and they work full-time. One member of the interview population is a student and a single mother. She did not consider the College to be a prime source of affiliation. She does not have a lot of time to spend away from home as she must care for her two children in most of the spare time that she has. The female employees whom I interviewed also socialized elsewhere except for 'work acquaintances' whom they talked to at coffee or lunch. The support staff at the College also seem to have formed 'work acquaintances' with the other workers, but do not maintain close relationships with these same people outside of work except for the odd social club function. Many of the women have obligations at home that take up much of their time after their paid employment. Although many good working relationships are maintained at the College, then, most of the women do not continue these relationships significantly outside of work. Younger, single female students without children are able to take advantage of the many social opportunities offered there to meet and maintain friendships.

At the local Women's Centre, however, I noticed that the most popular and well attended meeting was one where a local

clairvoyant did tea leaf reading. This meeting provided the most opportunity for socialness and for looking at one's possible future. It could then be a very social and a very personal session all at once. The largest group yet met for the tea leaf reading. There were approximately twenty women present. The women were very quiet and attentive after an initial very noisy social time. When the tea was ready and the speaker was about to begin, a hush fell over the room. The women participants were very serious about the predictions on their futures. They cooperated well and took turns, saying such things as "Do Laurie's next because she has to go soon!" or "Muriel, you go next, you've been waiting..." They considered the futuristic readings as being very real and it was imperative that everyone be quiet when the reading was in progress. It seemed to be something that was almost sacred to the women. Perhaps they were grasping for a glimpse of their future in the hope that it would promise something better. They were ecstatic if they were told "You will meet a man." or "I believe that you will be coming into some money soon..." They were earnest when they were told... "Things might not be good for you for the next while... you are going on a trip? Well do not plan it... something might happen coming up for you and it has to do with a plane and it does not look entirely good..." The atmosphere at the centre that day was special, there was excitement buzzing in the air. The Centre co-ordinators believe that social contact between women in common situations is the most important determinant of why women attend. "They seem to enjoy the

opportunity to share common experiences, it breaks down the isolation for them, it also gives them the opportunity to care for others and share with them." (J.200) These things are very, very important for those women who come to the Centre.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Pogrebin (1987) believes that

> "... female friendships have a political dimension, they become sources of resistance to the conditions of daily life...[they can foster]... the recognition that control of one's own life was to be found in overcoming the relations of domination which structure all women's lives... [The author goes on to state that feminist friendships]... spawn: confident individuals who form friendships that unite the self and the other in pride, vitality, and strength. Feminist friendship is an empowering interactive force with enough megawatts to energize each woman who plugs into it. You feel it when you notice yourself assuming the best of a woman, not anticipating hostility or suppressing envy. You feel it when you are interested in what a friend thinks- not just about you and your activities but about everything. You feel it when your friends alter your perspective on life, help you sort out your problems, enlarge your goals and help you move toward achieving them, help you see yourself not as one isolated woman treated this way or that but as a vital member of half the human race." (p.305)

The Women's Centre is a place where feminist friendships can be formed, and where empowering and interactive relationships can be fostered. Although the friendships which are formed or continued through the Women's Centre are not explicitly feminist, this political dimension is, as yet, on an unspoken level for most of these women. It is this kind of friendship which can bring women together to uncover and address the hidden agenda of patriarchal societal forces which so profoundly affect their lives.

CHAPTER 6.
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

6.1 'WHERE WE LIVE IS FUNDAMENTAL TO HOW WE LIVE'...

> "While it is true that the entire B.C. economy is dependent on natural resources, the dependency is seldom so clear for those of us in the city. Women in the Kootenays,... dramatized the negative consequences for women of relying on resources (and on the international and transnational corporations that control them) to 'fuel' the economy." (Putting Women on the Map, 1988: 4)

As Koch (1988) has pointed out, a central process of resource-based communities such as Cranbrook is the exploitation of natural resources for profit. Women residents of Cranbrook feel the negative consequences of relying on resources to support the community. As is the case in other resource-dependent communities, this system affects all aspects of their private and public lives; the social, spiritual, political and cultural (N.F.B., 1979A). It is the economic, political and social systems which so profoundly shape the lives of the residents of such communities and it is these factors which I shall now further address.

MacKenzie (1988) provides important information on the effects of the formal economy on the lives of residents of a West Kootenay community that experienced a severe recession in the mid-1980's. The author suggests that within the past decade, the changes in Canada's economic landscape have been analysed in two major ways. Firstly, a body of literature exists on the restructuring of macro-economic market processes which, in Canada, has documented the "...depression of the

resource-producing peripheral regions relative to the service-oriented core." (p.1) Secondly, there is a small but growing literature which documents the local implications and the responses of individuals and communities to these changes. In effect, the author sheds light on the strength of large corporations relative to the lack of power of resource-producing peripheral communities such as Cranbrook. MacKenzie argues that our treatment of the effects of the formal economy must be seen from the perspective of residents of peripheral communities. Global economic restructuring must be regarded in terms of it's affect on local economies, and on people living in peripheral communities.

This must be done, moreover, in a manner in which the margin is viewed 'from the ground up' or from the local residents' experiences. In effect, the social experience of dependency must be stressed and a re-definition of mainstream hinterland-dependency theory must be made. It is not that the theory itself is wrong; however, the political, economic and cultural processes it describes have typically been one dimensional, and have not treated hinterland residents' experiences as valid. The new definition must be one in which the re-structuring of the economic landscape is re-stated consciously on the terms, values and priorities of the residents of the 'margin'. It must be recognised that a state of dependency is not a natural domain. It is in actuality the product of social conditioning throughout a history of social subordination (as well as women's positions).

In November, 1988, the South/Central British Columbia Regional Conference of the National Access Committee on the Status of Women was held in Vancouver. The meeting gave representatives of women's groups from different areas of the province an opportunity to meet together and exchange information on a variety of issues. Participants from six regions of the province were asked to draw a picture of their region on a wall-sized piece of paper. The picture was to be a representation of various aspects of their lives and of the life of their communities. In effect, a map of each region of the province was drawn by the participants. A publication from the conference explains the significance of the exercise...

> "A map may be a picture of a country-surrounded by oceans, defined by mountains and plains, and linked together by highways. But a map can also be a picture of women's lives. We can see how women are surrounded by the economic, social and political structures in which we live, defined by the experiences of our daily lives, and linked by the work we do in our homes and in our communities. This is a report on mapping women's lives and building an agenda for change from the ground up." (Putting Women on the Map, p: 1)

The exercise then is consistent with the feminist principle that the personal is the political, and that women's perspectives must be pivotal to our work for social change. It is an exercise that is intended to empower the participants, producing results which form a picture of the economic, social and political system that begins from their experiences and their place in it. They are then able to discuss how it works, why it works the way it does and what might be done in order to change it.

The map exercise, among other things, demonstrated that... "Clearly, where we live is fundamental to how we live." (Putting Women on the Map, p: 2) Representatives from the Kootenay region attended the conference. All of the women representatives from this area are connected to local women's centres in the region. Despite differences among the regional maps and reports, four essential themes of concern emerged. The broad emergent themes were support systems, education, isolation and money. Women from the Kootenay region contributed extensively to the discussion on isolation. Perhaps the clearest example of the isolation felt by the participants in my study is the geographic isolation of women in peripheral areas, both from the core and from one another. The conference proceedings state that... "The Kootenay group reported that not only do they feel isolated from other areas of the province, but also experience too little communication within their region... women... described the difficulties posed by inadequate transportation services as well as weather conditions that frequently contribute to their isolation.. [the women also] talked about the isolation of disabled women and women on welfare due to social attitudes and physical and financial barriers." (Putting Women on the Map, 1988: p. 4)

Although some positive comments about the physical beauty and high degree of safety in the Cranbrook area were made, the majority of comments of the women study participants reflect a dissatisfaction with certain aspects of community life and force a re-examination of what makes a 'community'. These aspects

have been grouped into two areas, those pertaining to community services and social isolation.

6.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Women expressed dissatisfaction with community services, incorporating such things as poor employment opportunities, displeasure in doing volunteer work that is an extension of motherwork, poor cultural, recreational, transportation and medical services, as well as poor community services specifically for women and a desire for a 'safe' place to go to meet other women.

6.2.1 POOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES

> "Overall, the resource-extracting regions of western and eastern Canada are depressed. Employment losses in the forestry and mining sectors have had a domino effect on local secondary manufacturing and the service sector, causing shutdowns and bankruptcies from the interior of British Columbia to Cape Breton and Newfoundland."(MacKenzie, 1988, p.3)

In their analysis of women's domestic and wage labour in a Nova Scotia community, Connelly and MacDonald (1983) found that the informal economy maintains the labour force during times of high unemployment in the formal economy. Women move back and forth between domestic and wage labour as a reserve and ready work supply. Many of the women with whom I talked felt that the opportunity to secure a decent job is limited here. They expressed the desire to get a good job; one in which the hours were both steady and compatible with their other duties as mothers and wives, and where they could use their minds and still make a medium wage.

"Jobs are limited here for women. It's not what you know,

it's definitely who you know- very small townish." (HA.67)

"I'm not sure that if a man were to apply for a job, that he would always get it over a woman, but he has more options all around because he can move to take a job." (HA. 67)

"It is very hard to get a job here though... I don't think that I'll get one though I'm sure that he'll [husband] get one. Just any job." (HB. 166)

Previously employed in Cranbrook as a real estate agent, one woman explained that because the market is depressed in Cranbrook, houses sell for very low prices. Also the business demands great amounts of time during both day and night hours to meet buyers and sellers, show houses, and arrange all of the paper work. These two factors contribute to low incomes in relation to the great amount of time required to sell a house, and compared to the incomes agents make in cities such as Vancouver. Looking for other professional employment opportunities, this woman stated that... "I don't want to go to work selling bubble gum to kids, but other than real estate, there's not much other work I could do here." (N.75)

Echoing the difficulties that two professional persons in a couple can experience in finding adequate employment, 'M' states that... "I think a little differently [than other people who are not both looking for professional employment]. We'll go where we can get better employment opportunities... that will affect our happiness in a place... ". The inability of both persons in this couple to find appropriate and satisfying employment in the community prompted 'M' to state "...we're thinking of leaving."

(M. 120)

Many other women expressed dismay at the types of jobs available to them in town. Such comments as... 'You can go and work at McDonald's or K-Mart. That's about all that really comes up that often... if it's not them, it's another place that is similar. The job opportunities are so limited...' were frequent. Others were upset by the fact that they could only gain part-time employment at places such as the banks, the College, and as auxiliary secretaries and sales clerks. Others had full-time employment which would last for a certain length of time. Some women teachers and secretaries voiced dissatisfaction with never knowing if they were going to get work beyond the end of the term date. Women who did paid work found ensuring adequate day-care for their children difficult. Some found it hard to justify working as they ended up paying most of the work wages to the sitter. Comments were voiced such as... 'I only get paid for seven hours a day when I get work, but I have to pay the sitter for eight... I don't go home for lunch because if I do, the sitter doesn't do anything because I'm there, and the kids come to me for lunch... So I end up doing more work if I go home for lunch than if I stay at work. It bothers me that the kids don't realise that I'm home for a break and that it's the sitter's job to take care of them. If my husband came home for lunch, they wouldn't bother him, they'd get their own lunch or the sitter would get it for them.'

The impact of the absence of satisfying paid work on the time structures of all of these women's lives was significant.

Some complained of the boredom and isolation of being with small children all day. Some of the single mothers, who did not have the company of adults much at all, had completely shaped their lives to accommodate their childrens'. Unable to afford a sitter and often without the support of friends or relatives, these single mums would resort to living the same existence as their children. Others complained of hating to be the one who was always expected to do everything for everyone else in the house and yet not being able to depend on others to do things for them. Others were upset with the constant barrage of housework that had to be done. The impact of the lack of satisfying employment had a constant negative effect on most of the women with whom I spoke.

6.2.2. VOLUNTEERISM

In order to contribute to the operations of their community and to get out into the public domain, many women are involved with some community volunteer work. These women sometimes collect good wages themselves and are usually married to men who get good wages. Many of the women who do not have satisfying work expressed some dissatisfaction with their volunteer work, however, feeling that it is not valued, that is is not a good replacement for 'real work', or that they are bored or frustrated by working with the same people in a so-called 'co-operative' venture. They are often aware of a hierarchy in the operations of the volunteer organisation with whom they work, and think that a more flexible organisation, which is in touch with other related organisations in town, would better

serve their own needs and those of the community.

Expressing dissatisfaction with her part-time paid employment, and a desire to break out of the same volunteer organisations with which she has dealt for years, 'H' stated... "I'm involved with a lot of organizations in town. I do volunteer work for the Preschool Development Centre, the Recreation Committee for Summer Programs for handicapped young people, the Recreation Integration Committee and the Kinette club. I think these are too lop-sided though."(H.68) 'H' feels frustrated from working toward a goal of quality programs for handicapped people in the community, and yet never getting the services to the level where there is a paid person to direct programs. As the mother of a handicapped child, she has a real interest in developing programs of this nature. However, she is extremely tired of being one of a small group of other mothers of children with handicaps, who constantly tries to instigate work and influence other agencies to integrate programs, all to little avail. Her volunteer work has become an extension of her motherwork and she wishes that she could free herself of this and do volunteer work for the sheer joy of it. Instead of this kind of volunteer work, she would prefer to help newcomers to the community or to tutor in English to refugees in town. She feels obligated to stay with her volunteer work for handicapped persons as she is the mother of a handicapped child.

Another woman, who also did not find her part-time paid employment to be satisfying, voiced similar sentiments to 'H'..." I do volunteer work but I could quit tomorrow and I

don't think that anyone would miss me. I value paid work more. It doesn't seem as important, which is too bad. I work 25 hours a week for the Kootenay Society for the Handicapped." (N. 81) It became evident that volunteer work was only really done with joy when the women thought that it was valued and was something somewhat different from the demands placed on them as mothers. They did not want to do volunteer work that was an extension of their motherwork in the home. Instead, they wanted their volunteer work to represent a chance to develop other skills or do work that was considered to be highly valued by clients.

The women who spoke positively about the volunteer work that they did, felt that it was valued by others and themselves and was a chance for them to develop their own skills. 'M' an elderly woman spoke of doing volunteer work for the Elk's Club for over forty years. She enjoyed the opportunity to meet other women, to do fund-raising, to have a real part in the decision making of the group, and to do work in the community which she feels is highly valuable. For 'M', volunteer work is highly rewarding and is something very different from her motherwork.

6.2.3 POOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Many participants expressed dissatisfaction with community services in town. Specifically, the lack of a public transportation system was repeatedly mentioned by women from all data samples for the study.

"I spend a lot of time alone, we only have one car and 'C' takes it on weekends. We need a transportation system here badly." (E. 104)

"The transportation is a problem in getting to and from work though." (BE.144)

'BR' has no car. She uses a small wagon to pull her son around town in summer and winter. (BR. 153) Similarly, another woman with whom I spoke at a meeting at the Women's Centre told me that she had worn out three strollers last winter taking her child to the grocery store at the Tamarack Mall and back. She lives only four blocks from the mall, but there was no sidewalk built on the busy street on which she had to travel to get to the stores. Since then, work has begun on building a sidewalk beside the busy street. However, the woman feels that it would not have been built because of her problems with transportation, but rather because city officials would have done a study on how much car traffic frequented the street.

Indeed money seems to be the motivating factor in whether or not the Corporation of the City of Cranbrook will give the 'O.K.' for a public transportation system. I attended a city council meeting in which transportation systems were to be discussed and a decision made about whether one should be created. At this meeting, it was decided that first, a survey of the costs of public transportation systems in other towns in the province was to be done, then an estimate of the cost of such a system in Cranbrook was to be made, then city council would have to decide whether or not Cranbrook could support such a deficit (all of the other public transportation systems in similar sized British Columbia communities run at a deficit). It was decided by council members that if Cranbrook could handle

such a deficit, a community survey was then to be completed to determine whether or not residents would use such a service. However, this process illustrates that transportation is not viewed by council members as an essential service, but rather as a frill. This is only one small instance of the general conflicts of interest surrounding the funding of public services. What is underlined, however, is how the absence of public services is felt most acutely by those in society who, because of gender, poverty, age, ethnic origin and/or disability, need them in order to simply get by.

Rosenbloom (1988) reports that the transportation planning community in general takes a mainly economic view of the differences between male and female travel patterns. The author suggests, however, that social and non-economic variables explain more of the differences between men's and women's travel patterns than current transportation thinking allows. Rosenbloom, then, calls for policy analysts and advocates to take account of the social variables that have a profound effect on travel behaviour of women and to ensure that, due to the demands of a woman's activities, flexible and responsive transportation resources be implemented.

For many of the women in my study, transportation is an essential and much needed service, not a frill. Having such a service, even a minimum service, would mean the difference between getting out into the community and not. In the winter months, many women reported feeling isolated from others in the community. Some said they often felt as if their 'door was

nailed shut.' The lack of any public transportation system was a central factor in this isolation. One woman, on social assistance, explained that when she had to go out to buy groceries, she walked with her young son down to the grocery store, bought what she needed, and then, unable to carry it home by herself, called a taxi to transport her, her son, and their groceries. She hated doing this because taking taxis cut into her already limited budget. For this woman and many others in the community, the lack of a public transportation system makes it very difficult to simply get by.

6.2.4 POOR COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR WOMEN

Poor community services for women was another common complaint.

"Cranbrook. I like it here. The weather is nice. It's not very organized though and the community services aren't very good here. There are no offerings for young mothers. (H.67)

"As a mother of a handicapped child, I have to yell for services. I don't feel that I should have to..." (H.67)

"I want more programs for kids of all kinds, more job opportunities for women and more opportunities to upgrade your education so that you don't have to go away to go to school. I'm not the only one who has been stopped by this."(H.67)

"I would like to see more services for women in town, especially for women who are newly arrived in town, poor women, and professional women and for women who come here for their husband's job and then can't get work themselves." (S. 131)

"Childcare is a problem and it's not recognised as one.

We've gone from the extended family to the nuclear family with no supports. Now the supports are not here for childcare." (M. 127)

What is underlined by these women's comments on the inadequacy of services for women in town is how much difference it makes to be in a city such as Vancouver where such services are more readily available. In some cases, services could be offered or improved, but are not considered a priority by local government. Two such instances are the lack of a public transportation system and the inadequacy of public recreation programs to meet the needs of women, poor, handicapped, aged and ethnic people in the community. The result of the lack of such services is the growing isolation and marginalization of these groups, contributing to division in the community.

6.2.5 DESIRE FOR A 'SAFE' PLACE

Many women from the study expressed a need for a 'safe' place to go; a place where they could express themselves without fear of negative repercussions or resentment of others.

"There are circles in town. People travel in different circles and don't get out. I like eccentricity, I don't like too much structure... people need this kind of passion in their lives." (N.48)

" I'd like to be a member of a group where I could feel some very definite growth. A place to intellectualize some of the problems that I experience... just to talk to others with problems, not just to bitch, but to talk." (H.68)

"I like to go to the Women's Centre, they have a wonderful

library with feminist stuff. They've also deliberately set it up to be non-threatening so that it is accessible to everyone." (M.124)

These comments, which exemplify a need for a safe place to go, also indicate the divided nature of the community. Women want a place to go where they can find a friend or even just someone to talk to. Others express needing a place to go to where they can say things that are on their minds that they could not say or were not listened to at home. A place such as this represents a chance to break down some of the isolation that many of the women feel. As well, it would be a place where women could try to sort out some of the problems that they are having in their lives, a place where friendships could be formed and empowerment could be fostered.

6.2.6 EXPRESSED NEED FOR SERVICES FOR WOMEN

Many of the women expressed a specific need for services for women in the community.

One woman stated that she is very afraid that she would fail at a paid job. Feeling that she needs more of an opportunity to get out of the house, meet people and make friends, she believes that she must gain some confidence in herself. She stated that she lost all of her confidence in the public world when for years, she stayed at home and raised her children. (BE. 144)

On a very limited budget, one single-mother felt constrained by the cost of almost all services in town and is upset by the inconsistency of any services that happen to be

free of charge...

> "All the recreational activities here cost money... the few ones that are free are very inconsistent. For example the park wading pool opens very late in the season... I think around late June. Sometimes there's water in it and sometimes there isn't. One day I went there with my son and there was a couple there who were on holidays [visiting from out of town] and who had come into the park to use the wading pool. But there was no water in it. Also the bathrooms are not always open when you go there..." (BR.152)

> "There also needs to be more recreation services that are more open to poor people, and women with kids... They have needs to be met and this has not been addressed." (M.127)

Feeling that there are enough sporting opportunities in town, especially for men and children, 'H' stated that there is a lack of artistic offerings..."One of the problems of the community is that there is not enough culture. There are not enough travelling shows that come to town and the museum that we have is dark and dingy." (H. 58)

Many of the women study participants expressed dissatisfaction with medical services in the community. Some were disappointed that there is no female doctor in town, making it mandatory that women residents see male doctors. There is a feeling among many of the women whom I interviewed that the medical profession in town is very rigid and male-dominated. Consequently, one woman commented that... "I don't think that the medical services in town are good. They're too impersonal and it's not good care." (S. 130)

Another woman is offended by some of the sexist attitudes reflected in some community services, and feels there is a need to suppress such messages. "I'd like to see the women's part of

the Kinsmen Trade Fair eliminated. It's all on stereotypical things like cosmetics and stuff..."(M.125)

More quality day care was also mentioned as a definite need in the community.

> "We need more support for women and good childcare, daycare. There is a great need. Also special needs children have more demands so we need some form of very good quality, accessible day care and respite care because many families really need this. Not just want it, but need it." (R.126)

> "There needs to be more respite and babysitting so mothers can have a break. Especially for new mothers. And also there should be more programs for women who are new to the community and for women who are new to Canada. There isn't really anything for them. There isn't enough for women in this community. Also, recreational services aren't very good and they don't offer enough programs for women... the kids have it good though." (M.140)

Many of the women, then, voiced a desire for increased services for women in town. It became evident that a common thread throughout all of these comments is that male lives in the community are central to Cranbrook's services. Throughout the medical, recreational, and political systems, male's and children's needs are filled more adequately than those of women. As many women in town depend on public services in order to get out of their houses and do the most basic of activities that other, more fortunate people take for granted, the lack of adequate services in town greatly affects their lives. Individually and collectively, the women's concerns on this matter are great. However, finding opportunities to collectively participate in voicing their concerns is difficult for all of the women. Their concerns are, then, not heard and

the situation improves marginally, if at all. In order for the situation to improve, women need the opportunity to collectively participate in delineating their own needs and in developing courses of action which will bring about improved services for women in the community.

6.3 SOCIAL DIVISION

Social isolation and vulnerability were common sentiments voiced among women. Many women spoke of not only feeling as if they had no power or authority, but also of being at the mercy of others with power. As well, many were conscious of strong cliques and class divisions in Cranbrook.

6.3.1 POWER AND AUTHORITY

Most of the women reported some feelings of social isolation in the community. Feeling the social isolation and marginalization of being a single-mother who does not have paid employment, B. is ashamed of being on social assistance and is trying to do some volunteer work to compensate for her position. However, she finds acceptance hard to get.(B.144)

Other women commented... "The community is very insular. For example, the College- everything you do is under the scrutiny of so many people. If you do something wrong, chances are others will treat you as if you do things wrong. I can't feel like an individual." (C.9)

"I like the scenery here. I don't like the people though. They are small minded, narrow-minded- they think they know it all. I don't like the politics. There's the college, the parks and rec. department and the shop keepers. They have all of the

power but they don't really know how to do things right. They don't care about anyone but themselves... because they have all of the power. They don't even communicate between themselves." (C.13)

'Be.' likes to live in Galloway because then she's away from the government social assistance office. She says that they're always meddling if you live in the same town as them. "They always want to keep you down," she says and her friend 'Br' agrees. (Be.146)

> "You should ask a question about religion [stated one woman, although the subject of the strength of religious groups in town was frequently mentioned]... There are many women stuck in their homes too... I don't know how you would get to them? There are also many, many women who are involved in the churches- they spend all of their leisure time in the church fold. It's a barrier if you're not involved in the church. They have all of their own programs and people. This is a very religious community... in school and brownies, if you don't follow a religion, you're ostracised. The kids in school have to say the lord's prayer every day... and in brownies everyone must get their religion badge by studying the bible and rehearsing quotes. I disagree with this, but I don't want to make it hard on my daughter to fit in... There's also a lot of religion in the business community. One business' employees all go to the alliance church, another business goes to the latter day saints. I guess though that because the church is so strong here, that it does meet the needs that other places in town don't... like parks and rec. or other things." (N. 72)

It is evident, from these and other comments of women's, that many women in the community feel as if they have little if any power. They feel a lack of power because of their social positions (as a single mother or as a full-time housewife). They are hesitant to complain or to 'stand out of the crowd' for

they do not want to draw attention to themselves. They are leery of asking for what they want because they are afraid of the repercussions that this can have, being aware that Cranbrook is a male-dominated place. For example, one mother of a handicapped child fought for the right to have personal input into the way that her child was dealt with at school only to find that when she applied for work positions with the School Board, that she should have easily been able to secure, she was completely ignored. In order to gain teaching employment, she was forced to go to outlying communities. It is clear that the absence of power for decision-making and for being a valued member of the community has far-reaching effects on women residents.

6.3.2 CLIQUES

Another kind of social isolation reported by interview participants was feeling as if one did not fit into existing social groups.

> "People here aren't very open to getting new friends. I've lived in Kitimat, Vernon, and Victoria but I find Cranbrook to be a stuffy place. It takes a long time for change or creativity to happen."(H.67)

> "You have to work so hard at knowing people, and if you're not competitive, bubbly, and outgoing, it's even harder."(H.67)

> "Cranbrook doesn't have a lot to offer me. It's a closed community... it's hard to get to know people and make close friendships. There's two kinds of people here. Those who are in transit and don't want to make a commitment to the community and those that have been here all their lives and they've got their own thing but don't care about what other people do." (N.75)

> "My life changed quite drastically when I came here. I was pregnant, I missed the social

> resources that I used to have when I worked. I was new here and I didn't find it easy. I felt isolated. I still find it hard here." (M. 114)

> "I went to a meeting of the university women's club. It was tacky and very snobby." (H. 68)

This situation makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for many women to want to form friendships. Finding a group into which they 'fit' may be impossible for some women and others may not find having to fit in acceptable. These divisions of class, education and length of time in the community, mean that the development of a shared understanding of each other as women is unattainable. In the present state, with women and women's groups as divided as they are in the community, very few women have the opportunity to come together in a spirit of 'sisterhood', let alone friendship.

6.3.3 CLASS DIVISIONS

Other reports of social isolation reflected strong class divisions within the community. Feeling as if she is a member of the under-classes in town, 'C' states...

> I sense real class divisions in Cranbrook. Around my place there's a general bad ghetto-like behaviour. I don't like my kids playing with those kids. Cranbrook doesn't have a cultural identity. No class. It could change though if community groups got together to exert pressure on the people who run the community. There are terrible class divisions though. The people who run the community and then there are those who just function in the community but don't get input into how its run." (C.14)

It is evident that 'C' uses the word 'class' to represent many different things in her life. Firstly, she feels bitter that she has grown up in an middle-class family but has been

forced into the lower classes because she is a single mother. Secondly, she does not like it that her children have been labelled as lower class and have to play with the other lower class children in her neighbourhood. Thirdly, she describes Cranbrook as having 'no class' because, from her perspective, people in town do not try to hide the fact that there are definite groups of upper and lower class members. She suspects that the upper classes either choose not to see the lower classes or that they are incapable of seeing them. She feels, though that it is these people that have all of the power in town. 'C' is very frustrated by this situation. She very much wants for herself and her children what her parents have; such things as a good job, a comfortable house with a yard and a good confident feeling about herself. 'C' was so unhappy with this situation that she eventually left town.

Echoing 'H' and 'C' above, 'M' states...

> "I don't like the idea of the university women's club... they're just there to 'hob nob', not to make true friends. I went and I didn't like the whole idea of it." (M. 106)
>
> "... The university women's club is a good example of the hierarchy. It was one place where I really believed that might be for me, where I could meet people and make friends. But I've found it hasn't proven to be that and its really saddening because I've attempted many times and its just a matter of committing time but its also a matter of a strong hierarchy with it that I don't like." (M. 123)
>
> "This town is very socially divided- the welfare people and the upper class." (M.154)
>
> "There is a lot of hierarchy in this community and our present recreational system isn't reaching all levels of the hierarchy. I don't even know how it would. Here, resources and numbers of people are limited. Some people don't have the opportunity to get leisure... women especially... In this

> hierarchy there's no intermingling between top and bottom. There's a lot of stigma attached to being on the bottom too. I'm sensitive to this because I grew up in a low income family and now I find that I'm more middle class." (M.122)

It is evident, by the many comments of women on the divisive social nature of Cranbrook, that women in town feel that they lack power, that they are isolated and marginalized and that they can not become a part of the decision-making process in the community. They feel that the services that are provided to them are too few in number and of a low quality and high price. They are not satisfied with the services that are offered (medical, recreational, cultural). They also need many services which are not offered (transportation, women doctors). Many expressed a desire to do something about this situation, but were unsure about how to go about gaining power, or becoming a part of the decision-making process. Feeling 'frazzled' by just trying to get by, many did not believe that they could do something to change their situations. Others, mused about the importance of instigating a movement to express their needs, but were not sure how to go about setting the process in motion...

> "This study that you're doing sounds good... studying women is good. Maybe you could help the men to be more aware of what we do and then maybe they could do more things for themselves?" (A. 103)

6.4 DISCUSSION

MacKenzie (1987) suggests that the current recession and re-structuring may be creating new centres of economic and social innovation: the analytically and politically neglected homes and communities in the 'peripheral' regions of Canada.

Using the West Kootenay community of Nelson, British Columbia, as an example, the author argues that people are responding to declining employment opportunities by using the resources available to them in their homes and communities to develop new survival strategies. Nelson was, as Cranbrook is, a fairly diverse economic centre for a resource-based community. In the 1980's however, the formal economy gradually faltered in the area. In 1984, the university centre closed as part of a provincial government cost-saving strategy (Images, June/July, 1984), the sawmill and plywood plant closed, the Canadian Pacific Railroad freightyards prepared to close as did the regional headquarters of the British Columbia Telephone system, and Government employment was curtailed (MacKenzie, 1987). In response to the lessening of formal economic activities in the community, the links among the community organisations, which were traditionally structured around the informal earnings of residents, strengthened and these networks extended to more and more economic activities. For example...

> "The Nelson Family Daycare and many members of the artisanal community have ties to the Women's Centre which itself offers seminars on independent businesses and advice on grant applications. The Women's Centre in turn cooperates with the Unemployed Action Centre, the unions and occasionally with the Regional District or Chamber of Commerce to extend community resources for small businesses. These groups also have growing connections to members of the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ." (MacKenzie, 1987: 254)

The community has then established networks which affect all aspects of resident's lives; cultural, spiritual, social, political and economic. These networks use local skills to

activate local resources, and break down the barriers between people's work and other areas of their lives. In Cranbrook, very few networks which draw people and organisations together exist. In many cases, people gather to pursue a common interest, as evidenced by the many clubs in town. There is, however, little if any communication between them, and certainly no women's network has been formed in town. The emerging informal economy in Nelson is characterised by the same problems which are present in times of social and economic change. The networks are of a small size, they experience internal conflicts, are changeful, vulnerable, and dependent on local skills and demands. However, these characteristics, which can be seen as debilitating factors, can also be viewed as potential sources of strength. Work processes are not alienated, they are in close contact with local markets and needs and therefore influence, communicate with, and participate in the development of a community re-orientation for survival in Nelson. MacKenzie (1987), suggests that... "This strategy is unsettled, insecure and oriented to human survival, not to profit maximization. It is this last quality which at once makes Nelson's emerging economic base vulnerable, and gives it its resilience. It is, unlike the formal economy, something that remains." (p.: 255)

This kind of thing is happening in an embryonic state in Cranbrook through the efforts of such groups as the 'Concerned Parents for Childcare', the 'East Kootenay Environmental Society', and the Women's Centre, which actively works toward the improved social position of women. Also, as residents

weather many economic recessions, the permanence and ability of small businesses to meet local needs is enhanced. People begin to realize that what is lasting is what is here, local people who believe in the area. The large corporations do not meet lasting needs for, when all of the trees are cut down or are of too low a quality, they pull out of peripheral regions. Some residents of Cranbrook have begun to realise that what is lasting here is the informal economy. As a result, some small businesses and groups have turned to promoting their own services to meet community needs (local artisans and writers, second-hand stores, bed and breakfast inns, home-based hair salons).

There are some implications of an increased informal economy in terms of gender. MacKenzie (1987) states that... "One important effect of these linkages is to erode both the conditions for and the experience of gender role differentiation. As the jobs which men used to do disappear, and the possibility of having one primary breadwinner recedes, the strategies that women have always used to gain resources for households- strategies of stretching cash incomes through home production, home based businesses and casual wage work- become increasingly central to household survival." (p.: 254-55) The author examines two home-based businesses and cooperative networks which have been primarily established by women; namely childcare and craft production. Despite some shortcomings, MacKenzie suggests that this economic re-structuring of businesses and networks may indicate shifts in gender relations, based on family or home partnerships, and new economic systems,

based on meeting local needs rather than on those of the large corporations that were involved with the community. Women have become increasingly active in all spheres of life. They are involved in the small business sector, in the surrounding networks of this sector and consequently, in the community as a whole. It is not so much that women enter the middle-class, male-dominated sphere, but rather that this sphere becomes less central to people's lives and thus less powerful in the decisions that they must make, while the historically invisible and undervalued spheres of women have become more central to the operations of the community.

Although this is the case in Nelson, Cranbrook has a long way to go in terms of women's involvement in community operations. In Cranbrook, although middle and upper class women have some opportunities to participate more in community operations, the vast majority of lower class women are still highly marginalized. It is evident that in Cranbrook, women's participation in community operations only increases to the extent to which they enter the middle-class, male-dominated sphere. That sphere is still central to people's lives and thus is highly influential in the decisions that women must make. The historically invisible and undervalued spheres of women are still in such a state. There is much work to be done.

Although the city of Cranbrook has not experienced economic hardship to the extent that the city of Nelson has, it has experienced the instability of a hinterland community and it is quite likely that the situation could worsen. Both cities have

the status of resource-based communities, but it seems that, due in part to the severity of the fall of the formal economy, Nelson has attempted to actively restructure the economic, political and social landscape on its own terms. It would be beneficial for residents of Cranbrook to use our own local values in economic, political and social restructuring and to strengthen the dialectic between dependency and independency. As MacKenzie (1988) states...

> "To resist being managed into a new version of dependency theory, we must work the dialectic our way, using the leverage of our own values. And what are these? Simple feminist ones which first break the hierarchical dynamic of conventional economic theory by valuing all work and all initiative equally, and, second, which fundamentally re-orient economics around the axis of life and the lifecycle." (p. 17-18)

The results of these actions in Cranbrook would be increased services by and for women, increased networks of communications among community groups, decreased dependence on formal corporations to determine the future of the town and a general empowerment of residents who have traditionally not been made a part of the decision-making processes. Pulling away from the middle-class, male-dominated economic sphere of the community and developing interests and activities based on local needs of all residents would most definitely improve women's participation in community life in Cranbrook.

It is evident, from women's comments on community services and social isolation, that many problems would be alleviated by building strong community networks based on local needs and skills. The comments of women indicate that the Kinsmen/Rotary

rhetoric of small-town community spirit and togetherness obscures, if it recognizes at all, a very different reality of division, vulnerability, and indeed exclusion and lack of participation which bears down most heavily on lower-income women and less heavily on almost all women. Networking, and building a women's culture, would not only reduce isolation but would also provide the services so badly needed by so many women residents. Services both for and by local women would not only provide essential opportunities for empowerment, they would also improve women's integral inclusion in community operations.

CHAPTER 7.
'LEISURE' AND 'RELATIONALITY'.

7.1 A RE-DEFINITION OF LEISURE

Bella (1988) calls for a re-definition of leisure away from 'the dichotomy of work and leisure', and away from notions of leisure as 'freedom from obligation' and as 'an activity in and of itself'. The author argues that androcentrism, in which male experiences are taken as the norm, a common occurrence in academic thought, has a strong presence in the 'leisure' literature. Bella (1988) argues that concepts of leisure have been developed in reference to male lives and states... "The concept of leisure has been built on bourgeois men's experience of family and employment in an industrial age. The concept incorporates an artificial dichotomy between work and leisure, and is often assumed to require a level of freedom from obligation rarely available to women (or to men with ongoing responsibility for others)." (p.1) As a result, the author states, much leisure research reaches sexist conclusions and therefore fails at understanding human experience. Bella, then, instead proposes "... an approach to understanding human experience that returns the right to label an experience to those to whom the experience belongs. The multilayered relationship-bound experience of being human (whether male or female) can then be more fully appreciated and understood." (p.1) Bella argues that 'relationality', or the building of good relationships with others, is a more appropriate term than 'leisure' in representing women's experiences. However, rather

than labeling women's experience either 'leisure', with its androcentric origins, or 'relationality', with its traditionally gynocentric disposition, a combination of the two terms seems to more adequately represent women's lives. Taking this view requires that our understanding of the concepts of leisure must be moved away from their androcentric origins and towards a dialectic that includes aspects of self and mutual empowerment, relationality and general access to well-being and quality of life.

The data collected for this study on women and leisure in Cranbrook supports Bella's claim that concepts of leisure are androcentric, that they are based on a work/leisure dichotomy and that they include notions of freedom from obligation. Popularized concepts of leisure: for example that it is non-work time, an activity, or a state of mind - prove to be descriptive enough of the male experience, but fail to capture the realities of women's lives. Initially, the women respondents were silent, reluctant to talk, and even depressed by the subject of 'leisure', when it was brought up for discussion. It was as if they felt that even if they did voice their discontent, nothing would change. There was a sense of futility about leisure. As a result, when women in the Cranbrook study sample spoke of concepts of leisure that are based on these notions, they had very little to say. They found it so difficult to relate their lives to the concepts which are supposed to be representative of all of our lives, that they often said that they just do not ever experience leisure. When pressed, their comments indicate

that leisure to them, truly represents something different from the traditional male concepts.

Upon data analysis, it became evident that the women spoke about leisure in two voices. When they initially talked about it, it was almost always in relation to the traditional male concepts of leisure as non-work time, as freedom from obligation, and as a particular activity. They were then quick to add that although this was leisure, they never experienced it. This is the first voice. When encouraged to talk about their happiness, their joys, their lives, and their experiences, without necessarily using the label of leisure, the same women spoke of a complex tapestry of feelings and interrelationships, of themselves and others, and of their needs and desires. This is the second voice. Leisure became something quite different from our traditional male concepts.

Essentially the women spoke of experiencing no leisure if it was defined in an androcentric manner, such as being unobligated time. As well, if they felt that they experienced no well-being, or did not have the opportunity to empower themselves or themselves and others, then they reported not feeling any sense of leisure in their lives. The women did, however, report experiencing leisure if it was defined in their terms; as varied combinations of self and mutual empowerment, and personal well-being.

7.2 THE FIRST VOICE: ANDROCENTRISM AND WOMEN'S LEISURE.

7.2.1 'LEISURE IS UNOBLIGATED TIME'...

When the women spoke of having no leisure, they were

comparing their life experiences to the traditional androcentric concepts of leisure which Bella discussed. They spoke of the constant obligation that they felt for others, and suggested that if they had little personal sense of well-being or of building good relationships with others, then they were unable to relate to ideas like 'leisure time', or 'leisure activities'. Furthering Bella's claim that these concepts of leisure are not adequate in describing women's experiences, the women respondents stated that they did not get much leisure, if any at all. When the women describe what they think leisure is, and how or when they experience it, many define it according to present popular concepts. If self-described as for example 'freedom from obligation', the women said that they do not experience it. Defined according to androcentric principles then, leisure is not a part of the study participants' lives.

The respondent's comments repeatedly indicate a lack of leisure when defined as an activity, freedom from obligation or as the opposite of work.

'S.' defines leisure as doing something because she wants to ... something that is for herself, not for anyone else. She doesn't feel that she gets much leisure though. She states that... 'my husband's whole life is more amenable to leisure. He can do what he wants, when he wants.' (S. 132)

Many other women stated a constant sense of obligation to others...

'H' says that...

> "leisure is anything that I can do where I don't have someone to nag at me to do it. To be able to accomplish something without always being

> interrupted. That is the most most frustrating thing about my life. I will have time to start things but never to finish them. I'm always having to stop what I'm doing and look after somebody else's needs and I don't feel that other people do that for me." (H. 69)

When asked how often then she feels that she experiences some form of leisure, 'H' replied...

> "I don't get enough leisure. I can't put my needs first- there's quite a bit of guilt involved... I think we've all been conditioned to feel that way... I think that there are very few women who don't feel guilty about a whole assortment of things. Most women have a difficult time saying no to their children. I think society has conditioned women to feel guilty about a whole list of things..." (H. 69)

> "Leisure is not being obligated at all- I never really experience it. Sometimes, once a year or so, I take Michael to a friend's place and plan to do nothing for the whole weekend. I buy a cheap bottle of champagne and sit in the bathtub with bubble bath and a novel." (B.156)

> "Leisure is not being obligated to anyone- I never get this. I always feel guilt about not living up to my parent's expectations. They wanted me to be a nurse, but I was always too shy to go away to school so I married instead. I also feel guilt about not doing enough for my family, but I feel madness and guilt at not doing anything for myself. I'm very frustrated." (B. 147)

When the term 'leisure' was used in discussions, most of the women could not relate their lives to it. In short, they were basically speechless on the subject and, only if forced, had they anything at all to say about it. It is evident that the androcentric concepts of leisure that are supposed to be representative of all of our lives are not a significant part of these women's experiences.

At a discussion that I facilitated at the local women's centre in May of 1988, women participants found it very

difficult to discuss the topic of 'women and leisure'. After some probing questions such as "what does leisure mean to you?" were asked, the participants spoke about 'free time'and 'not having to do things all the time', or 'doing something for myself that's good, like selfish time'. Indicating that having leisure is a selfish thing and therefore something that they are not entitled to, the women thought carefully about the subject. Other than these comments on the topic of leisure though, the women were left speechless because even though this was the definition of leisure that they used, they did not really ever experience it. They could not relate their lives to the commonly held beliefs about leisure.

Instead the discussion turned to recreational provisions in the town. Again, although they felt that recreational activities were abundant for children and husbands, or for those that had the money to pay for them, recreation was also not a large part of their lives. The conversation then turned to discussing the myriad of other places and towns that the women had lived in. How they found Cranbrook to be a pretty place to live in comparison to other places they had resided, but that it is a horribly 'cliquey' place to live. They then spoke of the isolation and loneliness that they often felt, and of how the women's centre helped with those feelings by bringing women together a bit. This discussion, which was intended to get at the women's feelings of leisure, instead turned into one about people other than themselves. It was a discussion about others, and about the relationships between themselves and others. It

was about their husbands and their children, and it was about feeling lonely because other women would just 'use me for babysitting or to sell some home-product to'. It is evident from this discussion in particular and the many other attempts to have women talk about 'leisure in your life', that leisure, as we traditionally know it, is not a part of their lives but that it truly means something different to them.

7.2.2 IF THERE IS LITTLE SENSE OF WELL-BEING, THEN THERE IS NO SENSE OF LEISURE...

For many of the women respondents, having very little sense of well-being contributes to a feeling of a lack of leisure in their lives.

Feeling that a lack of self-esteem profoundly affects every aspect of her life, 'C' states that...

> "I live with the very real knowledge that I have that I can't... I really think that I can't succeed and I'm always trying to cover it up that I have no self esteem." (C.08)

A local art teacher, 'N' feels that her women students have such a low sense of self-knowledge that they are afraid to get to know themselves better. She feels that this is evident in the art work that these students produce...

> "Women that come to my classes want instant gratification. They want something that comes in a kit because they don't figure a skill is really worth learning thoroughly. They don't take themselves or their art seriously. They want to be told to put the sky in like this... you put the tree in like this... They never learn to draw well so they can't paint. Before you learn to paint, you should know something about drawing and colour theory. It takes self-discipline. I don't feel that contributing to the amount of crappy art is good. All the rooms in Cranbrook are filling up with sub-standard art. People aren't satisfied or fulfilled by it. Proliferating the amount of crappy art in the world, to me is not a good goal. Even if it's a very simple painting, if it

> expresses your attitude to life, its a picture of your jar of preserves that you made yourself, that you've made with love, to me that's valuable because its got something of the person in it." (N.58)

Instead of experiencing creativity, self-understanding and self-growth from art, the women only find the art classes satisfying in that they can give the finished products to friends and family.

'NE' expressed a concern for the constraining societal forces that inhibit the ability of women to realize their potentials...

> "I find that they structure their whole lives around their husbands, they're dependent on them and won't do anything without their permission but at the same time their husbands don't like to do anything with their wives. The guys go out and do this or that and the wives are at home looking after the babies and cooking dinner. They don't have a lot of recreation and they don't get out of the house." (NE.82)

Other women's comments indicate that the lack of self-esteem is due largely to having to function in a society which is not supportive of women developing their own needs, wants and selves...

> "I can hardly go to the mall or grocery store here because of my low self-esteem and I'm afraid people will gossip." (E. 91)

> "'B' lost all of her confidence in the public world when she spent years raising her kids. Now she doesn't feel that she has the skills or abilities to make it at a job. (B.144)

> "I'm never very happy at home... I would always rather go out. I'm getting happier to be here sometimes though. When I'm happier with myself, I'm happier at home. I would rather go to other people's houses rather than have people in. I always feel that other people have more to offer." (C. 18)

> "I'm a 'usee'. I seem to be able to be dominated and my life... personal, private and family... suffers because I'm trying to please everybody else." (E. 43)

7.2.3 LITTLE SENSE OF SELF AND/OR RELATIONALITY, LEADS TO LITTLE SENSE OF LEISURE...

I observed that if they experience a low sense of self-esteem, and or a low sense of relationality, then many of the women do not experience leisure.

'E', not only worries about the effects of victimization upon her, but also worries about having poor relationships with others. The combined effect of both forces on her life severely affects her happiness. She feels no sense of leisure...

> "I have three boys and I feel like the lone female in the group. I feel like I'm getting run out of town, as if nobody wants me. It was a real blow to lose my friends in the last two years and then others have a bad attitude to me. They won't even say hi to me in the mall, the gossip comes back to me. I feel rejected and victimized." (E. 96)

As well, 'B' found that the effect of a lack of self-esteem and a broken relationship with her husband seriously affected her happiness and the quality of her life. She feels no leisure in her life...

> When her husband went through some kind of 'mid-life' crisis, 'B' says that she did not know what to do. She felt scared and alone and guilty. Although she did not really know exactly why she felt guilty about his crisis and his leaving her, she partly blamed herself though she could not think of what she did wrong. She says that she always feels guilt.(B. 145)

Expressing confusion over what the meaning of leisure is to her, 'E' includes as integral the importance of building relationships with others, as well as remnants of androcentric concepts such as free time and freedom from obligation...

> "Leisure for me is books and reading, it's an

> escape. I went into a depression before because I had so much leisure when I came to Cranbrook. Its either that or I don't have any at all like in Prince George, when I was too busy with kids and family and work. Now I do sewing, crafts, spending time with the kids, visiting with them... leisure is something that I don't have to do." (E. 44)

7.3 THE SECOND VOICE: WOMEN NAME THEIR EXPERIENCE OF LEISURE

7.3.1 LEISURE AND RELATIONALITY

The women study participants expressed their feelings about leisure more strongly in terms of a web of relationships to others, including aspects of feeling and doing positive things for themselves and others. Leisure to them means more of a situation of well-being for both themselves and others. It is not found in a dichotomous principle such as work and leisure. It does however mean more of a woven tapestry of various experiences including building their own senses of self-esteem, confidence, skills and abilities, of meeting their own needs, wants and interests, and improving both their own relationships with people and the lives of others. As Bella (1986) states...

> "Women, I believe, should reclaim their experiences by finding words other than 'work' and 'leisure' to name the experiences that make up our lives.., I believe many of these new understandings would be concerned with relationships, and the ways that these are built through activity... Relationality... names the principle centrally representative of women's experience... This principle leads one to a better understanding of the meanings of people's lives than the dualism of work and leisure. The meaning of the activity is in one's relationship to, or responsibility for, or responsibility to those with whom one is doing the activity." (p. 38-40)

The true meaning of leisure to the women study participants lies not in a particular activity, in fact I seldom spoke with a

woman who mentioned a particular activity as being 'leisure', but rather is in the context of relationships with and responsibilities to others.

In a conversation, two women who are involved with the women's centre expressed why women come in to the centre. They believe that relationships, the forming and maintaining of good ones, is a pr[illegible]reason why women come to the centre...

> "Many times a woman will only contact us if she is in big trouble and she needs help from someone... It makes sense that the women would talk a lot about friendships and relationships because the maintenance of these things has always traditionally been women's ways hasn't it? It's too bad everyone isn't as caring and loving as many of these women are. When they see someone else is in need, they'll give a lot to helping that person. They care more about caring than money or anything else. I've seen women who have a lot of trouble themselves be so incredibly loving and caring to other women when they find out they're in trouble. Just being able to talk to others and realize that you're not just the only one who has problems is so good!" (J.J. 201)

'K' found it impossible to define what leisure meant for herself. Instead, she talked of the most important relationship in her life. All of her life is related to her young child's. They spend all of their time together. 'K' says that her mother was not good to her and she does not want to be that way to her child. She feels there are a lot of barriers in her life right now that make it a challenge to give her child the things he needs. She has no money for a car, sitters, or a house. There is no public transport and she doesn't like their apartment. It is not good for her child. 'K' feels that he really needs a yard to play in. When asked the "imagine that you could do anything" question, it was very difficult for 'K' to answer.

She talked about her child, of how proud she is of him, and of how smart he is. She likes to cook good things for them to eat and she likes to comparison shop for bargains.

Other examples of the extreme importance of relationships to the study participants was evident in our conversations. It was almost always included in discussions around the topic of leisure. To 'A', leisure means...

> "meeting friends and doing things with family. We find fellowship in the Church group that we go to. Its very supportive and warm there. Its being with people and really caring about them." 'A' states that... "until I got here, I hadn't really experienced leisure. I find that to say to someone 'I don't want to do that' is to say that I don't love them." (A. 44c)

> "Leisure is special to me. It's like visiting with my family. Its not a structured activity. If I have to do it, then its not something that is leisure.... Its not just an activity, but its being able to strengthen relationships. Like making a special meal, and fussing over it. I usually run like crazy to get it just right- just the way I want it. And then, sitting afterwards and talking- that's what is really important to me. When the people come over, then I can say 'I've done everything that I can and now I'm going to let go and enjoy.' The kids say that 'Mum gets into an advance spin before people come!'" (A/E. 44)

This orientation that 'A', 'E' and other women expressed is towards servicing others' needs and making others happy. However, most of the women (in fact all except one) thought that true happiness could be fostered only when they could find a balance of doing things for others and doing things for themselves. They did not feel happy if they had to simply service others' needs constantly. However, they also did not feel good about only building their own selves up. Even when,

as in the next section, women spoke of increasing their own senses of self, it was not discussed in a singular manner but instead was discussed in relation to others.

7.3.2 LEISURE IS A COMBINATION OF AN INCREASED SENSE OF SELF AND RELATIONALITY...

To other women, leisure represents a combination of an increased sense of themselves and relationality. The study participants expressed that what makes them feel good is both a chance to increase their sense of themselves and of improving relations with others. The following statements are indicative of the womens' desires to be able to develop aspects of themselves as well as others without feeling guilty or selfish.

'K' stated that she guessed that..."Leisure is... doing things with my kid and also doing things without my kid. Maybe cooking... Relaxing... but not too much. Shopping- pricing things and buying them at the best price."(K. 32) 'K's' statement on leisure indicates a definite sense of responsibility to her child and, to a lesser degree, a sense of the importance of taking care of herself as well. She states that relaxing is important, but she truly enjoys cooking and shopping for bargains- partly out of necessity and partly out of the thrill of "getting a really good deal on something." It is evident that she finds shopping to be a personal challenge. She uses the skills of comparing price and quality, and of predicting when items will be marked down, to obtain many products both for herself and her child.

'A' says that although she does not feel that she has much opportunity to experience leisure as she has been a single

parent for the past ten years, she is "...involved with the church and... (is) learning to teach a natural family planning course." (A. 44) Indicating a belief that leisure for her, although it is scant, means more of a multi-faceted notion that includes aspects of improving relationships with others (the church) and improving her own skills and abilities (learning to teach a course).

'N' considers that a good life goal to work toward is to... "have a few more close relationships, better friendships, and a good, challenging job." (N. 80) Feeling as if she is drifting without working towards these things, 'N' considers them to be important aspects of a good life. 'N's' comment reflects the personal importance placed on a good balance of things that mainly concern herself and things that primarily concern improved relationships with others. To reach the balance, or even to strive to attain it, is, in 'N's' mind, the essence of what she wants from life.

Other women, such as 'H' and 'N', express the importance of balancing aspects of both self and mutual empowerment...

> "I like to do things in the house that aren't housework, like projects. Wallpapering, working in the yard... I learned to ski this year- I love it because I found out that I was actually capable of doing it for one thing. Also its not competitive, it can be for everyone. I hate competitions and with skiing all of us can go and have fun and its not competitive. I also like to get involved with organizations- I like to feel as it I can make a difference in someone's life. I don't like the nit-picking, power tripping and in-fighting that goes along with the committees though." (H. 66)

Doing things cooperatively with others and doing things

just for herself are both aspects of 'N's personal sense of fulfillment...

> "...I like putting up drywall... we do it together. We create something. I also like skiing. I feel free and I love to be outside. I don't like staying inside. It's only been in the last five or six years that I've felt that I've experienced a sense of leisure or happiness at all." (N. 79)

7.3.3 'LEISURE IS A CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING FOR ME'...

To other women, leisure is mainly the opportunity and the act of doing things for themselves- of improving their self and their personal well-being. However, this was often expressed from an awareness that they did not have enough opportunity or support from others for their own needs. As a result, these comments reflect the desire of many women who simply wanted more of an opportunity to develop their own interests. This does not indicate that they want nothing to do with others. On the contrary, it indicates a desire for more of a balance of self and mutual empowerment. Not receiving the opportunity or support for self empowerment at present, and often never having been in this situation, women voiced wanting more of a chance to improve their well-beings.

'M' states that because she grew up in a poor family,... "Leisure is creativity... lack of money won't stop creativity. It's the most satisfying thing. It gives me the most pleasure... I really like making things (for myself). Like calligraphy - it takes me away." (M. 122) 'M' went on to state that as her children are now aged four and seven years, she does not have much of an opportunity for leisure. Her personal

definition of leisure has very much to do with the opportunity to develop her own interests in a creative capacity. Finding that the feeling of being 'taken away' is an integral aspect of what leisure means to her, 'M' finds great pleasure in developing her sense of self and her personal well-being.

The statements of many other women study participants, such as 'E', 'H' and 'N', on the subject of leisure echo this same desire to develop their own interests, personal well-being and sense of themselves...

> "The only time I'm really happy is when I'm accomplishing something, that's where I get all my self-esteem from." (E. 88)
>
> "Sometimes I feel leisure at work (school) if I have confidence in myself. It depends, if you have to worry about everything around you, you never have leisure." (H. 169)
>
> "Leisure is my fantasy life, my refuge and where I feel more at home in my fantasy life. A release, escape from a boring job, or a restricted family life. I feel it is the most important part of my life. It sustains me and I can take it back to my real life. My hobbies and interests saved my life, they're my salvation. It's spiritual- that enables an adaptability and sense of confidence." (N. 54)
>
> "When I was younger, I always wanted to be alone because then I didn't have to please anyone. I enjoy getting older because when I was younger, I always felt I had to please- I was very conscious of my image as a neighbour, as a churchmember, as an adult in the community. But my husband was always really easy going. I never had to worry about him or what he would think. However, certain standards had to be met. I had to be more kind, smiley, gracious... knock myself out.... It was very bad when I was in my twenties. That's why I always wanted to be on my own. It all stopped when my Mum died in 1982. I lifted the worries off, my kids left home... Just as we were coming to terms with our lives was when my mother died." (N. 55)
>
> "A lot of money is spent on hobby kits and oil

> paints sold in Cranbrook. People will spend any amount of money to amuse themselves and to reach a creative output. Its very narrow-minded and pervasive. I can't relate to them. So my solution is to go into my art. Please be true to yourself, respect yourself enough to teach yourself how to be creative, to get satisfaction and enjoyment and control. What they're doing right now is 'people-pleasing'... they give each piece that they make to every member of their family. Painting is a means of communication. Develop yourself... look inside. I feel as if I have succeeded if I can help a woman to open a door to herself. This is great... this is what it is all about, even if I can convince someone to be creative and choose their own scenery to paint. We must try to become in love with ourselves..." (N. 59)

Developing their own interests is very difficult for most of the women. They speak of the constraints on their self-empowerment. Expressing frustration at the difficulty of gaining self-improvement, understanding and confidence, 'H' states...

> "There needs to be more equality... I want more of an opportunity to just be myself, rather than to always be something for everybody else..." (H. 62)

This and other comments indicate a felt desire to be more of oneself. As a result, some adaptation of Bella's construction of 'relationality' is required. Women who have never had the opportunity to develop their own selves want to be able to develop their own interests. This does not however, mean that they have rejected 'relationality'. They feel that relationships are very important, as well as the ability to develop aspects of themselves. They seek a balance between self and mutual empowerment.

Another woman, after exhausting every other solution to her severely curtailed life here, was planning on leaving her family

as she found it impossible to achieve self-empowerment in her present family situation. Trying to build a life based on her wants and needs, she stated that "It's a new beginning for me..." (E. 97)

'K' feels that there is no real freedom or choice in her life. She wishes that she had more but feels that without money, it is difficult to have freedom or choice. (K. 27)

Some women, such as 'N', have reached points in their lives where self-development is more accessible. 'N's' children have grown up and left home. She describes her self and her life now...

> "I have a fear that I'll be locked in the house with nothing to do (from when we lived up North) so I have many projects and books tucked away in the closet. I just do them for the fun of it, then I give it away. There's really no utilitarian purpose for it, its just for me." (N. 51)

N knows herself well. She knows her likes and dislikes and says that...

> "Anything that you make and do- it feeds your soul, spirituality. You gain confidence in yourself and in knowing that you can do something. You have the joy of making it and a corner on your creativity. You can be a 'Goddess of your creativity' and your personality. By controlling yourself you can get ahold on your environment. When I was young, I felt completely at the whim of my family. Now I feel in control." (N. 51)

> "Leisure is the time that you spend on yourself, for your self-improvement. It comes in short spurts. Its selfish time. Its for relaxation. It can also be different things to different people. For me, I'm writing a book on dresses that I'm going to make one day." (N. 51)

Others are not in positions where self-empowerment is

plausible...

'E's' family is athletic, they are always out hunting, fishing and playing hockey. 'E' is not athletic, although she sometimes goes with her family when they are out doing the activities that they like, she only goes with them because she is lonely at home. 'E' is artistic, but has let her artwork go after years of working in the home and raising the kids. She doesn't feel that she has the opportunity now to do her art. She tends now to be very depressed and frustrated with her life. (E. 85)

She is most frustrated as she feels that she has nothing left to give her family. She has given of herself until there is nothing left and she is bitter that she gave so much and never developed her own self. Deciding to leave her present situation to resurrect her own self, 'E' states...

> "When I'm gone, I want to take art classes again, I'd like to go to Australia, and maybe open a business. I used to go to the opera... now all there is is hunting and fishing. I feel guilty if I don't let them do what they want... There always seems to be money for hunting but none to go to the opera in Spokane. .... I'm going to finish an art project, learn to type, and read some books. I want to, I just hope that I can do them..."(E. 95/102)

Others, such as 'C', have still consciously reformulated leisure concepts for themselves and are attempting to gain more of it. 'C.' talked about her personal definition of leisure as opposed to popular definitions. Such comments as... 'feeling at peace with myself', 'knowing that everything in my life is going good' and just 'feeling good'...were part of her definition of leisure. (C. 10)

Feeling that there are many constraints on attaining leisure in Cranbrook, 'C' left town...

'C.' says that she does not like this community as it is a 'closed place.' She states that if you feel that the community does not offer you opportunities to be at peace with yourself or that help you to feel good about yourself, then that negatively affects your leisure.(C. 11) 'C', not personally feeling that she experiences a satisfactory level of well-being, expressed a strong desire for self-empowerment...

> "For me recreation is an activity that may lead to an opportunity for satisfaction... but that doesn't happen that much with kids." (C. 16)

Personal choice is an important facet of many of the women's experiences of self-empowerment and well-being...

> "When we were young, playing was fun... But as we got older, we realized that things like certain types of play and things (Sunday drives) we <u>had</u> to do. We couldn't choose." (E. 37)

> "Leisure to me would be doing what I really like. I don't get these feelings a lot." (E. 101)

Leisure is...

> "... getting to do what I want, when I want it. It is like heaven because I don't get a lot of it. My concern is for the women who can't get any of this." (R. 121)

> "In spare time, I like to learn about the community. I like to go window shopping, watch people, visit, watch T.V. and read the newspaper." (H. 165)

At a talk that I facilitated at the local women's centre in February of 1989, I asked women to discuss their feelings and experiences on the topic of 'women and well-being in Cranbrook'. As I felt that the initial talk that I facilitated

in May of 1988 on 'women and leisure' was not highly successful due to the inability of the term 'leisure' to be relevant in women's lives, I decided to see what the women had to say about their own personal well-being. I was surprised to find that, on this subject, women had many, many comments to make. The structure of the talk was very loosely divided into three areas. The first dealt with what the women's personal definition of 'well-being' incorporated. In this section, the women 'brain-stormed' on the subject. They felt that well-being included such things as... "fe ling good about myself, accomplishing something for me, happiness, knowing myself and my talents, doing something that is valued to myself, having time for myself, getting support from others, having good health, having time to exercise regularly, developing myself and having recreation and fun." (W.C. 300)

The next section of the discussion dealt with constraints that the women felt in attaining the aspects of well-being that were suggested in the first section. The constraints that were voiced were such things as... "lack of money, being expected to do everything for everyone else and having no time or energy for myself, feeling harried, the pace of life being too fast, having kids before being able to develop my own interests, having too many children and or having them too close together in ages, getting a lack of support from husband, children and friends, having to deal with transience and geographical mobility, having a lack of decent employment opportunities, having a lack of adequate and affordable child care, being unable to eat properly

or having weight problems that affect health, and having no public transportation in town." (W.C. 301) The discussion participants felt that these items drastically affected the quality of their lives and their ability to ensure their own personal well-being. They also felt that if the quality of their lives was curtailed, then it was more difficult to do good things for others. As the issues were raised by the participants, much discussion ensued. Such comments as... "When I had my second child, the door to our apartment was nailed shut. I could never go out. I'm still so lonely..." (W.C. 301) were made during the course of the talk. Although all of the items were discussed at length, the women found the lack of a public transportation service to be particularly constraining. This issue lead to the third and final section of the talk.

The last section of the discussion on 'women and well-being' dealt with enabling aspects of well-being for women. The participants had the least to say in this area of the discussion, indicating a possible sense of helplessness, powerlessness, or resignation to the strong societal forces which constrain the quality of their lives. The enabling factors surrounding the womens' well-being were... "finding support from sisters, women's centre and from having flexibility in their schedules, being creative with the situations we're in, thinking positively about myself, and networking to improve our situations..." (W.C. 302) However, the women felt that it would be too difficult to get flexibility, support from others, and to think positively about themselves. They felt a lack of power

and that they were out of control. These were not really concrete solutions to the problems that they experience.

They did however feel that creativity and networking are solid areas that improve their lives. Having expressed dissatisfaction with local services of the parks and recreation department, the college, the taxi company, and the lack of municipal government support for a transportation system, the women discussed the possibility of networking through the women's centre to lobby against the lack of adequate services. In particular, a group of the women discussed how they could begin to voice their dissatisfaction with the lack of public transportation in town. When the meeting came to a close, the women had decided to write a collective letter to the Mayor. It was clear that the women left the meeting with a sense of hope, of happiness, that they could change some things in their lives if they were not happy with them. They had been given the opportunity to network with others and to realize that many of them have the same concerns about the quality of their lives. At the very least, the discussion broke down some of the isolation that these women often feel and helped them to realize that they are not alone in wanting things to be better. At the best, the discussion instilled a sense that these women have the power, collectively, to discover common constraints on their well-being and to form groups to begin to address these issues.

7.4 DISCUSSION

A substantial issue surrounding the discussion on 'leisure' and 'relationality', is the tension between the emphasis on

relationality, which is articulated in Bella and is clearly present in some of these women's accounts of what makes many activities meaningful for them, and the emphasis on self and on freedom from the demands of relations, which is evident in the comments of other women. Wanting more for themselves was most often voiced as a result of feeling deprived of the opportunity to develop their own selves. These women expressed wanting to improve their own interests out of the extreme frustration of being denied self improvement and therefore, fulfillment. They still felt that 'relationality' was very important, but were insistent on needing more opportunity to develop themselves as well as others. Ultimately, some qualification of androcentric concepts of leisure and of Bella's use of the concept of relationality is called for. A combination of the opportunities that some concepts of leisure suggest in development of the self and that the concept of relationality suggests in the development of others is important to everyone and not just women.

As 'H' states...

> "The system must be changed. Men need to recognize that it's just as important for women to do the kinds of things that they do and maybe differently. It doesn't have to always be the same things but he has to offer for her to get out of the home... out of the house... and not to feel guilty about hiring a sitter... to do the kinds of things that she wants to. Men just take this whole system, the way it is now, for granted." (H. 71)

It is clearly evident that the popular concepts of leisure as an activity, as freedom from obligation, and as the opposite of paid employment, fail to be relevant to the women respondents' experiences. Initially, the women were silent and even depressed by the futility of talking about leisure in their lives. When pressed

however, their comments indicate that leisure to them encompasses an elaborate tapestry of the aspects of relationality, self and mutual empowerment, self-understanding, esteem and confidence, personal well-being and quality of life issues. It is evident, through the women's comments, that a balance between self and other centredness is most commonly voiced as a fulfilling life goal. As 'H' states, our present patriarchal society is not supportive of these women's needs, leisure or other, and this 'system must be changed'.

CHAPTER 8.
THEMATIC INTER-RELATIONSHIPS:
THE STRENGTH OF PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter seven, the study participants spoke about leisure in two voices. When they initially talked about leisure, they spoke as if it were in relation to the traditional male concepts of non-obligated or non-work time. They then quickly added that they never experienced this. When pressed to talk about their lives and what leisure there was (or was not) in their lives, the women spoke in the second voice. Naming their own experiences of leisure, they spoke of a complex interwoven tapestry of their thoughts, feelings, interrelationships and of their needs and desires.

This study has centred itself on the dialogues of women in Cranbrook. Upon data collection and analysis, it became evident that these women's lives here are made up of complex inter-relationships and inter-dependencies that are like the woven threads that form a tapestry. Events which might initially appear to be isolated are actually found to be intricately attached to other events and relationships in the study participant's lives and experiences.

The thematic areas of kinship/friendship, community and leisure have been topic areas in the interview discussions. At times, it is (and has been) very difficult to discuss the themes independently of one another. In fact, in many instances, I have failed to do this, realising how interconnected the

thematic areas actually are. In these instances, I have noticed that I could discuss the frequently voiced discontent with community services most obviously under the 'community' theme but also under the 'kinship/friendship' theme, as it greatly affects the functioning of families and the opportunities for friendships, as well as under the theme of 'leisure', as it also affects the opportunity for the empowerment of the self and others. (Another of the many links that could be made between the community and leisure themes is that traditional concepts of leisure are androcentric and could be seen to be both products and creators of patriarchal society and the many concrete communities which function on a patriarchal basis.)

The point which I emphasize is that it is often more difficult to discuss the thematic areas of this thesis independently of one another than it is to discuss them inclusively, because the many dialogues in which I engaged with women demonstrate that their lives are a series of inextricably bound thoughts, feelings, needs, desires, relationships, and events. These entities are profoundly and even systematically affected by the patriarchal notions of family, community and leisure in which their lives are embedded. It is appropriate then, at this point, to discuss these inter-relationships in their wholeness as opposed to their separateness, as has previously been done. However, ideas, like people, can only be seen as related if they can also be identified as unique. In order to show all things that are related, and perhaps to articulate the connections between them, the discussion is on

three levels of analysis; current theoretical analysis, the analysis of women residents, and my own. The links and commonalities between the pieces of women's dialogues lie in the social forces which so deeply affect their lives. These forces, although taking a number of different forms, stem from systematic patriarchal oppression.

8.2 THE FORMS OF PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION

Throughout this study and through discussions with Cranbrook women, I have attempted to help women clarify their thoughts and feelings and situate them in the social 'map' of the community. As Code (1988) states...

> "It has long been assumed, in 'malestream' thought, that if experiences seem to fly in the face of established theory, then so much the worse for those experiences. Theories are granted an authority such that, if certain experiences cannot be explained by the theory, then there must be something amiss with those experiences. But like Gilligan, growing numbers of feminists are asking the revolutionary, subversive question: 'What is wrong with this theory that it cannot explain my experience and the experiences of other women.' This is the kind of question feminists are asking as they work to articulate the relation between theory and practice, and to undermine the silencing effects of theoretical, patriarchal power structures." (p.49)

From my discussions with women residents of Cranbrook and the subsequent data analysis, it became evident that patriarchal oppression manifests itself in a number of ways that profoundly affect these women's lives. Specifically, it is manifest in the social and physical organisation of society and the community, the labour market organisation of society and the specific community, the stereotypical views of women (even by other women), the strength of patriarchal organisations in the

community as compared to the marginalization of others, and the strong presence of androcentric concepts to explain and represent their lived experiences, even in the severest of situations, that of physical abuse. The following discussion will be formed around these areas.

8.2.1 PHYSICAL ISOLATION THROUGH SOCIAL DESIGN

Expressing feeling isolated both from society and her family, 'H' provides a statement that is indicative of many of the women respondents' views... "I don't feel society places much value on motherhood- it's a thankless job... I'm always having to stop what I'm doing and look after somebody else's needs and I don't feel that other people do that for me!" (H. 66/69)

A similar statement which demonstrates that 'E' feels isolated from good mutual relationships and support is..."I'm a 'usee'. I seem to be able to be dominated and my life, personal, private and family, suffers because I'm trying to please everybody else." (E. 43) Yet another statement which expresses feelings of isolation and a lack of fulfillment is voiced by another woman named 'E' when she says... "This study you're doing sounds good. Studying women with kids is good... If you could help women to be more aware... to do more things just for themselves..." (E. 103)

.i SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS

Djao and Ng (1987) focus on the sense of isolation experienced by women immigrants in Saskatchewan. The study reveals that these women suffer from the absence of an extended

kin system which serves as a significant source of moral, emotional and material support and that, more germane to the discussion, much of the isolation felt by women is due to the organisation of Canadian society, which both produces isolation and reinforces it for women. The authors state... "We argue that their isolation is structured and systemic; it results from patriarchal... assumptions in our social organization..." (p.142) Patriarchal assumptions about what is proper for women structure isolation in Cranbrook in several ways. In particular, patriarchy dictates that people live in nuclear families, mostly in single family dwellings. It requires that women follow men to strange communities in order that the men may secure work. It requires that women be ultimately responsible for raising children and doing housework. Basically, under patriarchy, men make decisions which affect everyone's lives and women follow those decisions. The authors go on to discuss how women's experiences of isolation are socially organised, and examine the features of Canadian society which create the sense of loneliness and isolation. In particular, the authors discuss two social structures of isolation. Both have direct connections to the lived realities of women in Cranbrook.

Firstly, the authors state that the very physical make-up of Canadian cities is designed with single-family dwellings situated along traffic arteries which lead to work and shopping areas. This facilitates interactions with the larger environment, rather than those within neighbourhoods. It is

difficult for women to build support systems within this kind of built environment. Any kind of collective or communal actions such as housework or childcare is hindered by such a private and divided plan. A woman in the study reported that she had grown up in an industrially less-advanced society where neighbourhoods were made up of blocks of dwellings which were 'hollow' in the middle. This meant that all the children of the block played in one large yard and could be watched by one or all of the women at once. There was a 'built-in' day-care system and a 'yard culture' where the women would all do their chores communally. Conversely, Canadian cities are socially designed so that women's support systems are difficult to form, leading to a greater sense of isolation from one another and dependence on their husbands for social support.

As stated in the publication 'Putting Women on the Map' (1988), women from the Kootenay region reported feeling isolation both between and within the cities in the region. Evidence of a great sense of isolation from one another is voiced in 'N's' account... "I have a fear that I'd be locked in (the house) with nothing to do, from when we lived up North. So I have many projects and books tucked away in the closet..." (N. 51)

'B' spoke of the intense isolation that she feels living here. She spoke of being desperate to network with other women who are separated as she is. She really wanted to talk to others and share her experiences. She states "... for so many years, I gave everything to my husband and my kids... I felt

like I was living in a cage... but now (since he left her) I get out of the cage a little more often." (B. 143)

The lack of high quality and affordable (subsidized) childcare services in Canada makes it difficult for many women to afford or justify day-care. Many women are then forced to care for their children in their private and isolated homes. 'H' has often been forced to stay home and be the sole caretaker of her four children. She has stated that she would much rather go out to work than stay home. She actually hates staying home to look after the kids. One of her children has some special needs and she is very concerned about the quantity and quality of integrated programs for the child in Cranbrook. She says... "As a mother of a handicapped child, I have to yell for servioes... I don't feel that I should have to..." (H. 67)

.ii VAST SIZE AND HARSH CLIMATE

The vast size and harsh climate of the area also contributed to the feeling of isolation for residents in Djao and Ng's (1987) Saskatchewan study. The women residents found it difficult to get out of their houses in the winter months, especially with the absence of public transport. This left many women confined to their homes for most of the wintertime. Even if the women had friends in town, the climate and lack of a public transportation system made it difficult to interact socially. Women in the community became both physically and socially isolated from their community. This is a common feeling of the women in Cranbrook with whom I talked as well.

Talking about the lonliness, lack of social interaction and

confinement to a house 'L' feels as a new mother here, she states... "It can be very lonely taking care of a baby who can't relate to you on an adult level... it can be depressing..." (L.45)

Some women talk of escaping the strong sense of isolation that they often feel. 'N' states... "Leisure is my fantasy - life, my refuge and where I feel more at home... in my fantasy life. A release, escape from a boring job, a restricted family life. I feel it is the most important part of my life... [It] sustains me and I can take it back to my real life. My hobbies and interests saved my life... they're my salvation." (N. 55)

.iii THE ABSENCE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

'E' also feels extremely isolated in her home due in part to the lack of a public transportation system here... "I spend a lot of time alone, we only have one car and 'F' takes it on weekends. We need a transportation system here badly." (E. 104) And so does 'B' as she states that transportation is a problem here. She does not feel that she should look for a job until she can find a way to get to and from one. Without a transportation system that is affordable, she can not look for work. As 'B' is elderly, she does not feel that she could continually walk to and from a job. (B. 142)

The many comments on the absence of a public transportation system in Cranbrook (discussed at length in Chapter 6 - Community) indicate that it is viewed as an essential need by many women. However, city officials perceive its provision as a frill. There is no doubt that, among many other things, the

lack of public transport contributes to hardship and feelings of isolation on the part of many women residents. It is evident from this data that the provision of public transportation is emerging as an important feminist issue in smaller communities.

.iv CENTRALIZED SHOPPING FACILITIES

Shopping facilities are reported as being centrally located in the Djao and Ng study. This is also the case in Cranbrook. Although the centrality of shopping services alleviates some of the problems which arise out of winter conditions, as malls make it possible for shoppers to go about their business out of the harsh weather, it also produces difficulties for those without private cars. For those women in Cranbrook who do not have the use of a private car, shopping is difficult. Even if public transport did exist here, centralized shopping facilities dictate that shoppers purchase items for several days at once. It would be difficult for women who might take public transport, if it existed here, to make many purchases at once and it is impossible for those who walk to shopping facilities to carry their purchases with them if they have to buy everything in one trip. Centralized shopping requires that those without cars make small purchases frequently.

If shopping facilities in town were de-centralised, with more shops in residential areas, those without cars could carry out their shopping with much more ease. The existence of neighbourhood shops also promotes social activity within neighbourhoods as, when frequent trips are made to buy food, small gifts or clothes, neighbours come into contact with each

other more frequently and shop clerks and owners get to know residents by name.

The network of sidewalks in town to centralized shopping areas is not consistent so that sometimes pedestrians might be walking on busy roads or gravel to get to shopping malls. In short, pedestrian traffic in town has not been provided with proper sidewalk travel routes. Centralized shopping facilities then presuppose certain modes of transportation and storage facilities such as the ownership and use of a private car. Centralized shopping facilities discourage the formation of networks within neighbourhoods and exacerbate feelings of isolation for those women who are not members of the middle-class or the professions.

The factors which make up this section on physical isolation through social design are intricately related. The absence of a public transport system makes owning a car a requirement for getting around in or out of town. For those who do not own cars, centralized shopping facilities are difficult to get to. The proliferation of single family dwellings contributes to isolation and makes friendships difficult to foster. As well, the vast size of the East Kootenay area makes travel to other places (where friends or relatives may live) difficult, if not impossible. The incidence of isolation was reported as markedly high in the winter months. The harsh climate affects the ability of those without cars to leave their homes and it was felt that when winter arrives many women are confined to their homes until the spring.

8.3 LABOUR MARKET ORGANISATION

The second area that Djao and Ng (1987) report as contributing to and even creating structured isolation for women within communities is labour market organisation. The authors describe the labour market as being divided into primary and secondary job sectors. The primary job sector is characterized by relatively stable and secure jobs in the monopoly and public sectors with high wage rates, benefit packages, promotion prospects, good working conditions, requiring skilled or semi-skilled employees. The secondary sector is made up of jobs in the service and light manufacturing industries such as garment work, which are more often than not part-time or casual positions. The workers are not unionized, there are poor working conditions, no benefits or job security and no chance at advancement.

8.3.1 POOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

The authors state that... "Not surprisingly, women... are over-represented in the secondary labour market: in job ghettos." (p. 146) With the strength of patriarchy in Cranbrook, it is not surprising that women are over-represented in 'job-ghettos' here. Patriarchal oppression ensures that women, especially women in resource-based communities, where most secure jobs are held by men, are forced into low-paying, casual jobs, often with very poor working conditions and little security. Poor jobs keep women in marginal positions in the labour market and contribute to their feelings of isolation and dependence. Moving here for her husband to take a job, 'M'

stated... "My life changed quite drastically when I came here. I was pregnant, I missed the social resources that I used to have when I worked. I was new here and I didn't find it easy... I felt isolated. I still find it hard here. I had a full time job in Edmonton before we came here... " (M. 114)

As 'N' stated... "I don't want to go to work selling bubble gum to kids, but other than real estate, there's not much other work I could get here." (N. 75)

A young woman I spoke with said... "When my class graduated from the high school here you either went to work at McDonald's or K. Mart or you left town. It's still the same, there's more places now but they're all the same." (W.C. 306)

'E' stated... "I want... better job opportunities for women and more opportunities to upgrade your education so that you don't have to go away to do it. I'm not the only one who has been stopped by this... Jobs are limited here for women... it's not what you know, it's who you know... it's very small-townish..." (H. 67)

8.3.2 MALE AUTHORITY- LABOUR

Langford and Keating (1987), in their study of social isolation and Alberta farm women, state that the patriarchal farm system influences a woman's feelings of social isolation. The authors report that...

> "Data on legal ownership of the farm enterprise do not reflect the partnership role suggested by work statistics. In fact, only 48 percent of farm women have any form of legal ownership of farm property, whether as individual owner, a joint owner or a partner with a written agreement. Once again, despite the overwhelming economic contribution by the majority of farm women, the husband is the recognized economic agent who also

> owns his wife's labour. As long as the patriarchal organization of the farm industry denies the farm woman equality as an economic and legal partner in the enterprise, both her social stature and the quality of her marital relationship are diminished." (p. 55)

In Cranbrook, the patriarchal resource-based community system replaces the patriarchal farm system. The strength of male authority is evident in many families and patriarchy is not peculiar to the resource industries. 'H' and 'L' spoke of how their husbands preferred them not to do paid employment because this pushed their husband's incomes into a higher tax bracket with Revenue Canada and his life was made easier when she did the work at home. When they worked, the women did not have as much time to complete their home duties such as preparing dinner for when he returned from work.

Male authority also extends to women's social lives as other women talked of how their partners would not let them play tennis as much as they would have liked to or did not like them to talk on the phone with their friends. A representative of an organisation which deals with battered women in Cranbrook also reports that women who are beaten in their homes must leave them, indicating the lack of personal control a woman has of her own home even when she is the innocent victim of physical violence. Women who had friends whose husbands dictated what they could and could not do also often expressed anger not at these womens' partners, but at the women themselves. It is clear that patriarchy creates the situations under which most women in town must live, however, some of these situations also produce patriarchy. For example, many women are not supportive

of other women for whom living under the authority of a male is more obvious. Often, I witnessed women turn against other women who did not have the liberty to, for example, 'play a game of tennis any time'. Malicious statements about these women were voiced behind their backs such as '<u>she</u> isn't allowed to do anything unless he says it's o.k.' or '<u>she</u> thinks she's such a big feminist, but I happen to know that her husband keeps pornographic magazines in their house!'. Rather than expressing anger at the man who would not allow his wife to socialize as often as she would like, or at the system which supports the authority of men over women, many women vented their anger on the women married to these men. It is evident that women, as well as men, can be producers and supporters of patriarchal oppression by placing blame on victims rather than the individuals or the systems which victimize them. All of these situations, both created by and producers of patriarchal oppression, serve to increase women resident's isolation from one another and dependence upon their partners.

8.4 STEREOTYPICAL OPPRESSION

It is evident that through the insidious nature of a patriarchal system of oppression, women often turn against women. Code (1987) examines the power of stereotypical conceptions of woman's being and how women must struggle against these in an attempt to abolish patriarchal oppression. The author states that... "Through a complex network of reciprocal influence, what a person comes to believe that she or he is affects what that person can know, and this knowledge structures

what she or he is." (p. 195) The author argues that women can not truly know their own potentials and selves until this tyrannical system of stereotypical thought is stopped. Examples of stereotypes are that...

> "Women are at once seductive, irrational, and passive. They are subjective and emotional in their judgements, scatter-brained, politically immature, financially irresponsible and constitutionally delicate. Incapable of sophisticated, abstract thought, their minds are forever occupied with trivia. Because their conversation is largely gossip, women inevitably lower the tone of intellectual gatherings. They can neither be trusted to engage in serious professional occupations nor can they be expected to carry out hard physical tasks. They are ineluctably at the mercy of their biology. So it is not reasonable, in the nature of things, that women should participate either in the 'processions of learned men', the professions of hard-headed men, or the sports of athletic men. Rather, their proper role is to adorn and maintain the sanctuary called 'home', man's haven in a tough world." (p.195-196)

8.4.1 WOMEN'S ACCEPTANCE OF STEREOTYPES

Despite the inability of this stereotyped 'knowledge' to represent women's lives, these statements set a definition of what it means to be a 'proper' woman, keep women in a confined position within society, and give credence to criticism of those women who attempt to defy their doctrines. These stereotypes constrain women's potentials and isolate their realities in a closed fashion. Code (1987) states that... "In consequence, women are often left without sufficient faith in themselves so much as to affirm the truth of their own experience as they know it..." (p.196) The example is given of a woman who would like to begin an education in order that she may improve her chances at employment. However, her husband does not allow her to do so

as he suspects that, congruent with popular stereotypical thought, she really just wants to escape her marriage. In reality then, "...the stereotype that informs his thinking confines and isolates her." (p.196)

This is evidenced in Cranbrook by the strength of such organisations as the 'Sam Steele Sweetheart Society'. Sam Steele Days is celebrated annually in Cranbrook, named after a historical military figure to the area. As part of this celebration, the Sam Steele Pageant is held. The pageant is a series of events in which young women residents are sponsored by various community agencies such as the Rotary International, Kinsmen Club, Rodeo and other organisations, in competition for the Sam Steele Sweetheart crown. All aspects of this ritual, which is widely supported by community agencies and residents, support patriarchal oppression. The underlying notions are that the winner of the pageant will exemplify what it means to be a proper and good sweetheart. The contestants must fit the appropriate stereotype of femininity; they must be pleasing to look at, sweet, young, and they must speak well (that is in a politically neutral manner). They must ride in the Sam Steele Days parade float (adorning it much like a hood ornament as the other women who ride on the race car floats similarly look). They must also attend local community events in representation of the Sam Steele Sweetheart Society, thus, the stereotypical image of femininity is supported and spread to all residents.

Another example of the widespread acceptance of blatant stereotypical treatment of women is in the 'Miss Eugenia Bathing

Suit Pageant' which has recently been instigated in Cranbrook. In the pageant, women must buy a bathing suit from the Eugenia Bathing Suit Company and wear it in the competition at a prominent hotel. The advertisements on the radio announce that... 'There is no speaking required ladies!'. The women who enter, and many do, must walk across a stage modelling the suit, while hundreds of males cheer. The woman's name and measurements are announced as the judges mark their ballots. The winners of the early rounds win a six-pack of diet Coke and they go on to the next round, where they must buy another bathing-suit. The pageant is then 'good for business' as the hotel makes money off the sale of liquor at the event, the radio and local paper make money selling the advertisement space, and the bathing suit company gets its name splashed all over town and sells many bathing suits to contestants. The women, in fact all women in town, instead get only the damaging effects of having been sold as sex objects to local men. The essence of both 'Pageants' is masculine hegemony, and feminine degradation and subordination. Yet, both events are highly popular and there is certainly no public resistance to them. It is obvious that, specifically in Cranbrook, men have named the world from their point of view and women have been excluded from the opportunity to construct social reality.

8.4.2 WOMEN FOR CHANGE FIGHTING THE CRITICISM OF OTHER WOMEN

There is also much evidence through the statements of women in Cranbrook that assumptions and stereotypes (patriarchal structures of oppression) can be adopted by other women

residents. Women who want to challenge these stereotypes find themselves fighting not only against men's constraining attitudes; they often face criticism from other women as well. At a preliminary meeting of a small group of women interested in establishing a women's studies course in the curriculum of the high school, it was agreed that not only would they be fighting the traditional attitudes and beliefs of men in the community but that women might resist the inception of the course as well. One woman at this meeting, discussing the Status of Women committee in the Cranbrook District Teacher's Association said...

> "We really changed our name (from Status of Women to Human Rights) because there is sort of subtle resistance in the schools among staff when you'd say 'I'm on Status of Women committee' it was 'yuk, yuk, joke, joke' and we couldn't get... (respect) There are very very conservative women in this district too... we're not just fighting male opposition, we're fighting women- who see us as a radical, bra-burning group which of course, we are not! But just working towards improving women's situations you know and so we thought well maybe if we called ourselves the 'Human Rights" then there'd be less resistance and then the C.D.T.A. said 'well, if you're going to call yourself that, why don't you take on racism as well' (but it was too much to handle) so the group decided 'we're just the Status of Women and that's all we do'... A lot of the women that I end up with on the committee are very conservative... they're against subsidized unemployment benefits for pregnant women... when you talk to them about 'a man can carry on his career, he doesn't lose any seniority or pension benefits to have that child... why should the woman?' no they don't see it that way. They are really conservative..." (W.C. 304)

The resistance of women to other women who are fighting for equality is a very common occurance in town (and cities and universities...). There was a basic distrust of other women

voiced by a group of about seven women at the women's centre's speaker series on May 25, 1988. The women expressed a feeling that it is hard to get friends in town. They felt that other women would just use them for babysitting services or to try to sell home products, such as Tupperware and Avon. (W.C. 5)

'K' also stated a distrust of other women in town. She does not trust people here. If she wants to form a friendship with a woman in town now, she will insist that they meet at the friend's house. She does not want them to come to her house as she feels that other women use her by asking her to babysit or by using her phone to make a long-distance call and then never re-paying her for the favour. (K. 26)

'I' got very mad when she spoke about other women here. She is bitter as she feels that she does not fit in with any other women in town. Going to a meeting of the Beta Sigma Phi organisation was a mistake for her. She stated that... "it was awful... those women just talk about fluff. The level of talk is so low. I'm not educated, but I want to talk about something that is important you know?... I also find that working women are boring... All they ever do is work and they don't know anything else. They don't have time to learn anything else." (I. 303) At this point it was clear that 'I' was very mad at these women. Going to the meeting was a big disappointment for her as it increased her sense of isolation, rather than lessening it.

'N' does not understand why women in town feel that they have to go out to work. She says that on cold winter days, the

women on her block get up early in the morning to bundle up their little ones and get them out the door to the sitter. 'N' feels that this is a shame for the mothers and the children, all of whom should be happy to stay at home. (N. 46)

8.4.3 THE DIFFICULTIES IN CHALLENGING THE STEREOTYPES

Code (1987) supports the effort for all human beings to attain the best self-knowledge that is possible. However, there is great difficulty in acquiring self-knowledge for women in the present environment of insidious stereotypical thought and male-defined social reality. It takes a very strong person to stand up to and challenge these stereotypes in order to refute and reformulate them. The author provides examples of women who are forced to acquiesce in a stereotypical view of themselves in order that they may survive, in their personal lives within their families and in the more public lives, in the workforce. In Cranbrook, many women support stereotypical thought because it has become such an integral part of community rituals. The Sam Steele Sweetheart Coming Out Ball is one of the big events of the year and many mothers support their daughters in entering. The ritual is sacred in town and no one publicly considers it to be damaging or stereotypical to women. The women who enter the pageant are held in high regard for doing so. They are seen to be fine, upstanding community members who support community spirit. Anyone who voiced criticism of the event would be considered to be a poor community supporter and, what's more, to be un-ladylike. As Code states... "There are situations... where there clearly is survival value in not

knowing oneself and one's strengths and capacities." (p.201)

It is however a profoundly unjust social order that requires women to 'buy into' these stereotypical views of themselves. They are forced to deny the knowledge of themselves in order that they may live a bearable life. "Ultimately," states Code, "...it is only when women can, individually and collectively, find the courage to recognize the falsity of stereotypes, and to refuse them by living them gradually but persistently out of existence, that real change will become possible." (p. 201) The great difficulty of the situation is exacerbated by the fact that we must all survive and attempt to live in a society that is profoundly built upon and shaped by these stereotypical, male-dominated conceptions.

This is evidenced by the grave difficulty that almost all of the women that I spoke with had in talking about leisure. The widely held, androcentric concepts were easy to say one sentence on such as "leisure is free-time, basketball... but I don't get any of that". It was however, impossible for the women to relate to the term at all until they were given the opportunity to think about the term and discuss it from a different perspective, their own. When given the chance to rename the concepts on their own terms, the women suddenly had much to say about what leisure (or the other terms used to represent it such as 'well-being', 'feeling good', or 'something for me'...) means to them. However, having women rename their worlds on their own terms is not often done and, as 'H' states... "There needs to be more equality. I want more

opportunity to be something for myself, rather than being something for others... always." (H. 62)

8.5 SOCIAL ISOLATION-PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Continuing the discussion of women and isolation, Chalmers and Smith (1987) discuss the psychological, social and physical isolation expressed by women who are residents of small communities in Canada. The authors state that... "For all women, isolation is partly an effect of the structure, place and role of the nuclear family within the larger society; it is also a product of women's socialization, as individuals and in terms of their 'appropriate' role within the family." (p. 16) Women's participation in the family system has been to nurture and protect children and husbands from the demands of public life; to create a 'Haven in a Heartless World'(Zaretsky, 1976 and Lasch, 1977). Women then become increasingly dependent upon men for economic, and social support. Child care responsibilities are viewed as being ultimately women's, and they become underrated in the paid labour force. This very private family system is largely left to run on its own, and if any resources exist to combat problems which may arise in the system, the focus of the intervention is to maintain the social institution and to move it away from its isolated 'dysfunctional' state. The authors note that "...maintenance of the family has meant that families' problems are to be 'managed' and not confronted. Furthermore, privacy has meant that problems are to be privately managed." (p. 17) In reality, 'management' is just covert 'confrontation'. In practice, confrontation means physical,

verbal or emotional violence, in the vast majority, by men against women.

As one Cranbrook woman respondent stated...

> "All of your inequalities don't really bother you until you're in the position where you can't change them... It was when I had kids that it really bothered me that I had full responsibility [for everyone in the family]. I did it because we both [her husband and herself] came from really traditional families... you never complained, mother didn't... I feel guilty when I complain because my mother never complained." (H. 65)

8.5.1 PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Physical violence against women is an extreme product of patriarchal oppression. When physical violence against women in Cranbrook reaches the point where they can no longer bear to deal with the problem privately, they may seek help publicly. A representative of the local Community Action/ Crisis Centre reports that... "An average of one woman per week is placed in a 'safe home' (a screened, confidential home of a volunteer, where battered women and their children may stay in Cranbrook). We consider our 'safe home' network to be one of our services that is quite successful due to the fact that the people who volunteer their homes to be a 'safe home' are committed to helping women. Some 'safe homes' in the community have been with us for seven years..." (C.A.C.C. 306)

8.5.2 BLAMING THE VICTIM

Privately, dealing with the horror of physical abuse and powerlessness in their own homes is extremely difficult. However, even when a woman decides to seek help from public agencies, she often finds herself justifying her position for it

is common practice in our society to attach the blame for abusive relationships on the battered. Such questions as "How could she stay in such a relationship?", "How could she let herself be beaten?" are asked, the focus being on the woman in the relationship. Talk shows on television are devoted to the presentation of battered women who have 'gone public' with 'their' problem. Unfortunately, questions such as "Why do men do this to women?", "Why do we not focus our attention and anger on the men who abuse women?" and "How can we stop men from beating women?" are not asked. A columnist for a leading Vancouver newspaper, recently devoted an article to the problems surrounding blaming battered women for their situations. The author states that we should not be shocked that this 'blaming of the victim' happens so often for...

> "We live in a society which teaches men it's OK to be aggressive, and which only grudgingly permits women to be assertive... We still encourage women to become economically dependent upon the men they marry, a situation which is unhealthy for both sexes... And we need only look at our churches and our governments to see that we live in a society which thinks it's OK for men to tell women what to do, for men to be in charge while women follow. The mythology of the wife as submissive is still with us. The mythology of husband as kindly disciplinarian is still with us. He just shouldn't discipline so noisily or cruelly that the rest of us are forced to notice and get upset. If he does, there is, however, a solution. We'll blame his battered wife." (The Province, March 03, 1988)

This view toward women is also held in Cranbrook. I experienced an incident in the Spring of 1988 where a neighbour woman was attacked by her partner in her house. He tried to kill her with a pair of kitchen scissors. The woman ran to

another neighbour's house for safety and the partner ran after her into the neighbour's house. There were many witnesses to this event. When the incident was over and neighbours gathered to talk across their fences in the days that followed, it was clear that the blame for the incident was placed on the abuse victim. Such comments as "You know... he was living there" and "She's got the classic abuse profile" were made. No one would have gone so far as to say that she deserved such treatment, but all of the comments centred on her and her actions toward her children and her partner. Not one comment was made about the partner who was the person who instigated the abuse.

Huntley Hutchinson and McDaniel (1986) state that... "The prevalence and power of the victim-blaming ideology identified by various researchers... in which the victim is deprecated and the offender excused, an ideology the victim herself internalizes... acts as an explanation and justification for sexual violence in our society. Myths surrounding sexual assault overlook women's powerlessness and subordination to male authority."(p. 18) Other authors have discussed the subordinate position of battered women in small communities. Chalmers and Smith (1987) discuss the factors which are specific to the general system requirements of women's role in the family and from their socialisation about what is appropriate behaviour for women in the home, both which reinforces and exacerbates isolation. Assaults on women by their partners increases their sense of despair and isolation, and decreases their sense of self-esteeem. Childbearing and rearing increases feelings of

isolation and the authors cite evidence that violent partners deliberately disallow their wives social contact with friends and family to hide their own violence and to emphasize their wives' dependence on them. As well, the authors report that some men increase their wives' dependence and isolation by constantly moving to small and remote Canadian locales. Economic survival and the fear of disturbing their children stopped many of the study participants from leaving abusive relationships. The isolating experience of living in a small or rural community creates a system where it is difficult for these women to come in contact with one another and without the feeling that 'I'm not the only one', without coming to know women who do manage to survive on their own and coupled with poor paid employment opportunities, the feelings of isolation are worsened.

8.6 THE STRENGTH OF PATRIARCHAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE RELATIVE WEAKNESS OF OTHERS

8.6.1 THE POWER OF PATRIARCHAL ORGANISATIONS

Women in Cranbrook voiced dissatisfaction with some forms of overt patriarchal oppression, although this was always done in confidence. Many women would wait until I turned my tape-recorder off to tell me about their feelings about the strength of patriarchal organisations in town. Many voiced discontent with the strong presence of the Church here. 'H' stated that "Religion has really slowed up the women's movement. Keeps them down... emphasizes the traditional, the men make the decisions in the families- she's the caregiver and takes care of people's needs but when there is a major decision-

he makes it. The women can think, but they can't say what they think." (H. 61) Other women voiced discontent with the actions of such groups as the Kinsmen (at the 'stereotypical representation of women at the annual Kinsmen Trade Fair') or the male-dominated business community (who, it was seen, had 'too much power and refused to communicate with other groups in town'). Interestingly enough, very little dissatisfaction was voiced against the Corporations who are the main employers in the community. This possibly indicates the strength of the necessity for work and perhaps, the distant relationship that corporations such as Crestbrook Forest Industries and the Canadian Pacific Railway have with the community in relation to other, smaller, more community-minded agencies.

8.6.2 THE MARGINALITY OF THE WOMEN'S CENTRE

The women's centre and its programs are in a marginal position as its stance is in complete opposition to patriarchal oppression and, consequently, it challenges the status quo in Cranbrook. An example of the Centre's marginality is that it is often difficult for the centre workers to raise the funds for their battered women's support group meetings. This is a service that, by its very nature, should be considered essential both by and for residents of the community. However, it is always a struggle to secure funds for maintenance of a support group for victims of violence in the home. 'B' is a regular member of the Centre. She feels the marginality of her life in Cranbrook. Describing what her life would be like if it could be any way she wanted it to be, 'B' states... "I would want a

good man, a house in the country and a garden. I'm not a career type." (B. 157) A single mother on welfare, 'B' is very tired of the constant day to day struggle of life. She has no money to buy the things that she would like. She can not afford to enroll her child in recreation programs. As there is no public transportation system in town, she must walk everywhere she goes. She is tired of this marginal existence and views dependence upon a working man as a way to get support for her and her child. When pressed, she and her friend stated that they liked being single, if only they could afford to be on their own. They liked just taking care of themselves though and feel that men are more difficult to take care of than children because they demand more and because the women know that, unlike children, men are capable of taking care of themselves most of the time. (B. 151)

Chalmers and Smith (1987) report that when battered women receive absolute support of their situations and complete condemnation of their abusive partner's actions, this can be a powerful and liberating force in their lives. The desperate need to break down isolation and find support is one reason why the women's centre is a fundamentally important community service. The authors report that battered women who live in rural areas "...tended to be somewhat more likely to report being confused or unable to think, which may reflect their more limited range of options." (p. 26) When these women tried to go to the helping networks of family and friends, legal aid, and medical professionals and the police, they reported them

ineffective in ending the abuse. Some sources of help such as police intervention actually worsened the abusive situations. It is not true then that some form of intervention is better than none at all. Most of the women advocated the extension of shelters for abuse victims as well as education to increase public awareness of the problem of violence in our society, more effective intervention from the police and the support of these women through "... counselling, visits, or the formation of a self-help group... These women are clearly recommending the extension of shelter services, which suggests they appreciate the empowering aspect of breaking down the barriers of isolation." (p.33)

Cranbrook does not have a shelter or transition house for battered women, however there is a 'safe-home' system run through the local Community Action/Crisis Centre. The Crisis Centre operates a twenty-four hour crisis line, a link to the centre that frequently handles requests for help by battered women in Cranbrook, and the surrounding towns of Fernie, Sparwood, Elkford, Galloway, Jaffray, and Kimberley. The Centre representative reports that not only is the lack of public transportation a problem in terms of women's mobility and isolation in the community and in leaving abusive relationships but that these problems are exacerbated for battered women and their children who live in outlying areas. A Crisis Centre co-ordinator reported that..."Until the Government decided that it would pay volunteers gas mileage to go and pick up these women, we were relying on people to help who got little or no

money to go sometimes two or three hours in their cars to potentially dangerous situations." (C.A.C.C. 306)

Chalmers and Smith (1987) discuss the safe home system from the perspective of its women clients. The authors report that although the safe-home system is intended to provide women with a refuge from a violent situation, it may fail to help the women to understand the unjustness of why they are beaten and to empower them. The length of time which a woman can spend at a safe home is limited as it is basically volunteers who open their homes to these women for a small per diem remuneration from the Government. The battered women are then denied both the opportunity of time to think about their situations and to come into contact with others who share their situations. Safe homes, then, offer only partial solutions, without much more substantial support.

However, a representative of the Cranbrook safe home system says that the system...

> "...is unique in the Province as it is actually quite successful. The women clients of the service are satisfied with the service because we screen people who apply to have their home put in the system. We average one woman per week that we actually put in a safe home. You can double that amount if you want to figure out how many women contact us for help, but will not leave their present situations. Our service is completely confidential. The spouse will never find out where she is, which is a disadvantage of a transition house. We refer both partners to counselling services in the area... As well, we advocate for the woman where it is appropriate to do so, with doctors, lawyers and the police... One of the persons we have in one of our safe homes is a woman who was beaten years ago, she left her husband through a safe homes system, had to go on welfare, but now she has a pretty good job, and she and her kids live in a house that she owns. She is the type of person that we like to have in

> the program so that when the client needs to talk, she has someone who can empower her... who knows what its like and who can be very supportive. We have busy and quiet times of the year you know. Like around Christmas, it's usually very quiet... we had one woman come in on December 6 and another on the 24th, but mostly it's quiet then because the women are trying to hold their families together for Christmas... If it could be run any way we wanted, we'd want more funds so that we could have a full-time person to co-ordinate the homes and another person to work with the women and children in programs to help them..." (C.A.C.C. 306)

Although there seems to be many successes with the Safe Home Program, this kind of program and other social services are held in a marginal position due to the lack of governmental and often community support given them. The Safe Home Program worker does also not suggest to women that they get involved with the Women's Centre. The Women's Centre does run a battered women and children's support group, when it can receive funding to do so; however, battered women who approach the Crisis Centre are not directly referred or given support for the benefits of attending this program. Although husbands and spouses of battered women are encouraged to seek out the services of the government mental health offices and the East Kootenay Drug and Alcohol Centre, battered women are not encouraged to go to the battered women's support group meetings. This underlines the marginal position that the women's centre occupies in the community even in relation to other helping agencies, such as the Crisis Centre, which would benefit from increased ties of communication.

It is also evident that Cranbrook needs more funds to run programs for the victims of violence against women and children

in the community, in order that women may realize that they are not alone and that it is not their fault. Breaking down the isolation may help them to understanding and empowerment. Chalmers and Smith state that "...the fact that volunteer families are prepared to offer safe homes attests to 'grass-roots' concern about family violence. [However]... effective services to battered women are characterized by true community involvement in their establishment and by opportunities for the women to understand why they are beaten, to lose their sense of isolation and to make informed choices about their futures." (p. 35-36) Although there is evidence of 'grass-roots' concern about family violence, Cranbrook has unfortunatly not reached the stage where there is true community involvement in the empowerment of women who are victims of violence.

The purpose of this chapter has been to bring together isolated themes and to discuss them in an integrated manner. The discussion has, then, dealt with the ideological underpinning of social reality for many Cranbrook residents; patriarchal oppression. Various aspects and consequences of patriarchal oppression have then been discussed. It is evident that social, physical, and labour market organisation, coupled with masculine hegemony in the form of stereotypical thought, produces women's experiences of structured isolation and physical abuse. A male defined view of reality is predominant in this community, reflecting the "...privilege of the dominant group and the omission of the powerless in the construction of

social reality." (Huntley Hutchinson and McDaniel, 1986, p. 19) In the next chapter, an exploration of how to break down feelings of isolation, foster strength and empowerment and situate women in the social reality of the community will be discussed.

CHAPTER 9.
OVERCOMING PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION

9.1 THEORY AND PRACTICE

> If we cannot even transform our own domain assumptions and if we are not even capable of talking to each other in a shared language, then what chance do we have of transforming ...leisure and capturing [it] for our own use rather than the requirements of capital, the state and patriarchy? (Deem, 1987: 24)

The purpose of this study has been threefold. First, to 'fill the void' in studies done on women in community settings by incorporating a feminist approach to the concept of leisure into research on women in hinterland communities. Second, to gain a better understanding of women's everyday lives in communities of this type. And third, to empower women by situating them in their particular social context and by having them name, and claim, their own experiences for themselves. I want to end this thesis by discussing the implications of my findings, and by suggesting some alternatives for change.

This study on women, leisure and community takes a feminist approach which incorporates a belief that leisure is something which is struggled over and involves aspects of power, that it is very important to involve leisure in strategies for social change, and that it is possible to transform leisure from a practice which helps to subordinate disadvantaged social groups to one that serves to empower them. When given the opportunity, study participants spoke of leisure not in its traditional androcentric sense, but rather in a transformation of this state. Women spoke of leisure as a balance between self and

other centredness. They voiced a desire to develop their own interests, but in the context of the extreme importance of the inter-connectedness of others. In this regard, the women found a voice, their own voice, to talk about something that traditionally has not belonged to them. When they spoke, they spoke of leisure as something very different from our traditional assumptions that leisure is an activity, a time, or the absence of responsibility. On the contrary, leisure is part of an intricate tapestry involving themselves and others; their well-being in the context of the well-being of others.

Other topics of importance to women were family/friendship and community. Again, on these subjects women had much to say. They often feel helpless and powerless to get the things that they need and want from the community or their families. It is evident that many of the women are frustrated, isolated and feel that they do not get support from the community or their family to reach a goal of self and other-centredness. Instead, many are frustrated by always giving to others and getting very little, if anything, in return. They feel the male-dominance of the community and their family systems in very real ways. Women are at present highly divided in the community, both geographically, socially and philosophically on many issues. It seems as if women are most able to reclaim for themselves the more abstract theoretical aspects of their lives than the more practical everyday practices that follow the theory. For example, they can develop thoughts and beliefs about what leisure means to them and they can start to transform the

meaning of the concepts of leisure more readily than they can transform ideals of the kinship system or of the community. It is only changes in the system that can draw attention to the importance of relationality, rather than making it a pre-condition. Holding up relationality as an ideal for women depends on very specific changes in patriarchal family structures which place responsibility for caring work exclusively on women and changes in community policy, paying closer attention to services which would reduce isolation. In order for these transformations to occur, women must come together on some common ground.

Although infusing domain assumptions with feminist beliefs is a good goal, ultimately women must be empowered. They must be empowered to speak for themselves and not just to have someone else speak for them. In the words of Merleau-Ponty (1974)... "If we actually reflect on our situation we will find that the subject, thus situated in the world and submitting to its influences, is at the same time he [or she] who thinks the world." (p. 241) Women, then, must, having 'thought' their world, be encouraged to find a voice in which to both think and act. Here we see the links between the theoretical, the practical, and the political. The empowerment of women must occur so that they can speak and act for themselves. In this way, the exploration of differences between women (in this case, largely a result of geographical location) contributes to our increased understanding of the richness of our lives and to building theories which better represent them. This enables us

to draw links between women's lived experiences (the practical) and contribute to a broader understanding of oppression (the theoretical).

9.2 TRANSFORMING THE THEORETICAL

9.2.1 INFUSING FEMINIST BELIEFS IN AN INTEGRATED SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LEISURE

At the theoretical level, Deem (1987) discusses the importance of integrating different approaches to the sociology of sport and leisure. The author argues that domain assumptions must be transformed in order to be representative of more people's experiences and, more fundamentally, to build a stronger basis for understanding and transforming them as areas of cultural activity. Deem argues that at present,

> "...different theoretical perspectives are moving in separate, albeit sometimes related, directions. This means that the central claims and arguments of one approach are being ignored by others or taken on board only as cabin luggage rather than as key members of the crew. Such a situation is very problematic for those of us who are seeking to change the nature of sport and leisure in our societies." (p. 2)

The failure to attain synthesis in theoretical approaches to sport and leisure is linked to the underlying philosophies of the various approaches to the subject. Therefore, if some level of integration between the different approaches is to occur, it will most successfully be done between those perspectives which share some common domain assumptions. Deem examines four currently prominent and nominally critical perspectives on sport and leisure in order to uncover their commonalities and, therefore, the potential for integration. The author discovered that, amongst the four perspectives and domain assumptions,

there were four quite different positions:

> "... pure theory and let the practical politics look after itself (Rojek); theory with an anticipation of, but no steps towards a new politics of sport (Hargreaves); theory and a few faltering steps towards a development of a politics of culture focused round class struggle (Clarke and Critcher); and finally an analysis which combines both theoretical action and political moves focused around gender and the subordination of women." (Deem, 1987: 20)

However, Deem found significant similarities between the domain assumptions of three out of the four perspectives. These include the following:

> "1. A shared assumption that sport and leisure are practices which are struggled over and connect to the exercise of power. 2. A recognition that radical strategies involving sport and leisure are as important for social and economic change as are strategies for the economy. 3. A shared belief that it is possible to transform sport and leisure from practices which help subordinate and oppress disadvantaged social groups into practices which can overcome exploitation." (p. 22)

Deem argues that if different perspectives on leisure are to be adhered to separately, then there is scant hope of social change. Alliances must be developed across various perspectives in order that we might transform leisure and capture it for our own use.

The author supports the feminist analysis of leisure and states that the feminist contribution to the development of the social sciences has been highly significant. "Feminist analyses," states Deem, "... have helped rescue the whole area from the cul de sac where conventional male researchers have led it. Indeed until the arrival of feminist interventions, the sociological study of sport might have been more appropriately

renamed Football studies." (p. 19) Thus, not only has feminist study challenged 'malestream' thought, it has also set out to transform leisure.

As a result of this study, many women have begun to think of concepts of leisure in their own terms. They have begun to challenge androcentric concepts of leisure as well as to feel more secure in transforming their own leisure practices. The links between theory and practice have been strengthened through this feminist analysis of leisure.

9.2.2 POWER AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Baker Miller (1976) argues that women come from a position in this society in which their own nature has been defined for them by the dominant culture. As indicated by the responses and comments of women in Cranbrook, these dominant definitions are far removed from women's realities and they most certainly do not reflect the fact that women in Cranbrook seek to become 'self-determining' individuals. Baker Miller suggests that self-determination is ... "feeling effective and free along with feeling intense connections with other people." (p. 119) Power is inevitably linked to women's struggle to reach self-determination as, without it, women will continue to lead circumscribed lives. Women must be encouraged to break away from the dependence that they now have on men or else 'relationality' becomes a trap. However, the opposite, total independence, is also not a good goal as women would then have 'crossed the floor' to the independence of the male (in the dominant group's conception of the term). It is evident that

what Baker Miller terms 'self-determination', Cranbrook women have voiced in their descriptions of their own concepts of leisure. Leisure (or self determination) can only be a significant term to women, however, if it begins from where women begin. In order to begin from women's perspectives, we must first understand where they are. This requires an understanding of the processes of power. Baker Miller (1976) states...

> "In general, for women today, power may be defined as 'the capacity to implement.' A large part of this task is the implementation of the abilities women have already. There is also a need to implement the new ones women are developing. This has not been the meaning of 'power' in the past. Power has generally meant the ability to advance oneself and, simultaneously, to control, limit, and if possible, destroy the power of others. That is, power, so far, has had at least two components: power for oneself and power over others. (There is an important distinction between the ability to influence others and the power to control and restrict them.) The history of power struggles as we have known them has been on these grounds. The power of another person, or group of people, was generally seen as dangerous. You had to control them or they would control you. But in the realm of human development, this is not a valid formulation. Quite the reverse. In a basic sense, the greater the development of each individual the more able, more effective, and less needy of limiting or restricting others she or he will be." (p. 116)

This, however, has not been the way that things have been made to appear. Women begin from a position in which they have been dominated. Yet the first steps to more power, the use of power towards their full-development, begins in such actions as re-claiming on their own terms such traditionally androcentric concepts as leisure. Baker Miller argues that when women begin to claim power for themselves, their participation will

strengthen its appropriate use... "Women can bring more power to power by using it when needed and not using it as a poor substitute for other things- such as cooperation." (p.118) An end result of women's increased use of power is an integration of the use of effective power, feminist values and women's strengths as we continue to seek and define them. The aim of success lies in the abilities of women to respectfully engage with others. Women must now be encouraged to create their own environments in which they can function in respectful interaction and in real confrontation.

9.2.3 EXPLORING OUR DIFFERENCES

In a discussion of feminist theory, Maroney and Luxton (1987) argue that feminist perspectives have moved towards four aims... "first, recovery - discovering the women 'hidden from history' [Luxton, 1980]; second, a deconstruction of existing non-feminist theories to reveal their androcentric assumptions [Bella, 1986, 1987, 1988]; third, the reconstruction of theory based on revalorizing the feminine and what women do [Gilligan, 1982]; and fourth, metatheoretical critique - a feminist reflection on theory construction [Deem, 1987]." (p. 2) While the authors note that feminists have come together for their scholarly commitment to challenge 'malestream' thought and the oppression of women, they caution that the large concept of 'women' can obscure the very fundamental differences among women, especially those of socio-economic status, geographic location, age, race and sexual orientation. They emphasize that many differences exist between women and that the validation of

these differences is fundamental to feminism's scholarly and political objectives. The authors state...

> "Feminism and the women's movement cannot speak for all women. Instead, our task is to empower all women so that they can speak for themselves. The recognition of difference is also vital to the effort to build general theories which genuinely account for women's oppression." (Maroney and Luxton, 1987: 3)

This point, that we must not obscure the differences between women but rather discover what our differences are, is central to the feminist perspective. We must then avoid sweeping generalizations which hide our real differences. This is an important point of departure for the development of feminist theory according to the lived experiences of women in resource-based communities, for their lives are in many ways different from those of white, middle-class, urban women who are most often represented in feminist scholarship.

9.3 TRANSFORMING THE PRACTICAL

9.3.1 COMING TOGETHER

It is painful and humiliating for women to admit that they are oppressed. As Luxton (1980) argues...

> "If women admit they are oppressed, they undermine their sense of self-worth, their pride and dignity. They undermine what sense of security they have in the world as it now is. And even more challenging, once women acknowledge their oppression, they confront the problem of figuring out what to do about it. It takes courage to confront the problems and to begin fighting back. Whenever women resist their subordinate position, they face great upheavals in their lives. They often meet anger and resentment, not only from the world at large but, more painfully, from their dearest family and friends." (p. 205)

This point is echoed by 'J', a member of the Women's Centre,

when she explains why she thinks so many women who attend the Centre are not married...

> "The Women's Centre serves mostly single women. You guys, the married ones, are in the minority here and I think its because their husbands wouldn't let them come here. They wouldn't be supportive..."(E.J. 403)

Just as motherwork is often hidden and yet central to the operations of families, communities and society as a whole, so women's struggles are often unseen. They are, however, important on many levels, from the level of the family or friendship, the community level, and to the level of naming of ideologies and concepts that are supposed to be representative of all of our lives but which are, in actuality, androcentric. Luxton (1980) emphasizes the importance of women's collective action in addressing issues at many levels, stating...

> "For wage workers, trade union and pro-labour political parties provide organizational forms within which workers can develop their political consciousness and organize collective forms of struggle. For women doing domestic labour there have never been such organizations that could bring women together to discuss their situation, decide what can be done to improve it, and mobilize women into action. However, taking a stand alone is very hard, and individual action often remains at the personal level. To take the fight into social and political arenas, women need to get together with other women." (p. 206)

Although many argue that Luxton's domestic labour under capitalism debate is tired and old, this is not the case in Cranbrook (and I suspect in many other cities and towns in Canada). Women in Cranbrook are not encouraged to develop themselves, they are still ultimately bound by traditional concepts of femininity and nurturance. They are still

responsible for the domestic labour. They often must care for others to an endless extent and at the expense of themselves. Worse, they are isolated and divided. It is time that they came together.

9.3.2 THE WOMEN'S CENTRE

The Cranbrook Women's Resource Society which runs the local Women's Centre is a local organisation which is run both by and for women. The Centre is grounded in feminist principles that recognises women as oppressed and seeks to correct women's subordination in society. However, compared to the number of women in Cranbrook, the membership and amount of women that the Centre attracts is small. The Centre is part of a provincial network of individuals and different interest groups bound together by a loose feminist ideology and a commitment to struggle, through various strategies, for equality for women. The feminist movement and feminist principles are quietly supported at the Centre. A small collective consciousness has been fostered there. This helps some community women to develop an awareness of their situations and form strategies to counteract the various forms of oppression which they endure. As women become conscious of the conditions of their work, Luxton (1980) argues that they begin to face the contradictions of their lives. The author states...

> "Then they decide what their immediate needs are. Once they have determined those needs, they establish a series of demands based on where they decide they want to go. This means that the women's movement is constantly grappling with ideas about what kind of life women want to live. One of the most important lessons of the women's movement is that women need to talk to other women. By sharing their experiences they begin to

> recognize and understand the patterns that underlie their lives." (p. 210)

For the most part, women in Cranbrook have not yet done this. The framework does, however, exist through the organisation of the Women's Centre where there is a core of interested, and motivated women who are very aware of the forms of oppression and patriarchy in the community. This dialogue began in the early eighties by a group of women whose feminist beliefs were considered to be too radical at the time. These women eventually left the community. A new group of women are now involved with the Centre. They are in the process of exploring their own beliefs and experiences and of reaching out to women residents in hope of improving the lives of women in general. Fearing the negative repercussions that the last organisers met, these women are more cautious and pragmatic in their stance and program delivery. So, for example, the word 'feminist' is rarely mentioned at the Centre. Given the extreme male-dominance and conservatism in the community, many seem to be afraid of using such a 'radical' term.

9.3.3 EMPOWERMENT- PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE

Eleven women attended the Annual General Meeting of the Women's Centre in May of 1989. These women exemplify those who have came together to share common concerns and experiences, to explore the forms of oppression and patriarchy in the community, and to struggle, through various strategies, for the empowerment of women here.

The impetus to overcome patriarchal oppression lies in the hearts and minds of women. Just as the 'Putting Women on the

Map' (1988) conference gave British Columbia women the opportunity to break down isolation, and to discuss the forms of patriarchy which they saw as particularly prevalent in their communities, so does the act of coming together to discuss women's experiences in Cranbrook. The local Women's Centre is an ideal organisation from which such collective action begins. Not surprisingly, then, many of the women involved in the day to day functioning of the Centre have felt empowerment from their involvement.

Through her involvement with the Women's Centre, 'E' has come to know herself and her community much better. On the subject of the possibility of joining together with other women's groups in town in order to strengthen the effort toward social change for women, however, 'E' feels that only the Centre is truly feminist. She states...

> The other women's groups in town, the business and professional women and the university women and the sorority women, they're just out for themselves. They don't want to change anything. So there's no way that we can form close ties with them. (E.O. 405)

There are three levels at which the Centre seems to function. At one level, women who are in dire need of help come in to the Centre for a referral to the local Food Bank or to seek shelter from an abusive spouse. At another level, women who seek companionship and the opportunity to break down strong feelings of isolation come in to take part in the Wednesday morning program for social opportunities or just to get out of their homes and have some time with other women while a Centre worker looks after their children. At still another level,

women become involved with the operations of the Centre, by becoming Centre directors, by speaking at the Wednesday morning sessions or by organising an event which is sponsored by the Centre. At all levels, the women who come into contact with the Centre gain a sense of empowerment, whether it is from finding support for walking away from an abusive relationship, meeting others with whom to share experiences, or bringing ideas to the Centre in planning future events and programs aimed at empowering women.

Emphasizing one level of involvement that many women share, 'L' states...

> When you're starving, you're not interested in discussing how to fight oppression, you need to get food and clothing for you and your family. (L.M. 400)

Demonstrating the vast need for elementary services for women in Cranbrook, 'L' talked about how the more practical sessions for the women's program on Wednesday mornings are more popular than other, more theoretical discussions about women's positions in society. Indeed, the two most popular meetings at the Centre in the past year were a tea leaf reading session (providing social opportunities and possibly a glimpse of a brighter future) and a session on how to take legal action against an abusive spouse or one who refuses to pay child support (demonstrating the prevalence of abuse and neglect of women who have endured much hardship and are trying to make do on their own).

For other women, as well, involvement in the Centre has been empowering. 'J' feels that we have come a long way in the fight for equality for women in town. She has been involved

with the Centre now for five years and says... "Things are getting better, they're pretty good right now. I've seen a lot of changes in this town over the past five years." (J.E. 402) Asked what changes she has noticed, 'J' couldn't think of anything specifically, but feels that people are just more aware that there are problems that need to be resolved surrounding women's lives. Possibly she feels this way as a result of the many volunteer hours that she spends working for the equality of women in town. She obviously gains a sense of empowerment and great satisfaction from her involvement at the Centre.

At present, there is some controversy in the Centre as to whether or not the Centre should claim itself a 'Pro-Choice' organisation. Some of the directors feel that it should not, as previously the Centre got a bad name for itself in the community for being 'too radical'. In the early eighties, the Centre was run by a group of lesbian women who were very open about their feminist beliefs. Many townspeople took extreme offence to this and the women were eventually forced to leave the community. Since then, those who have been involved with running the Centre have taken a conservative stance on women's issues. Now, some women in the Centre feel that it is too conservative and should take a public, or even simply a private, stand as a 'Pro-Choice' or even feminist organisation. It is evident, then, that the abortion issue is not only raging in the courtrooms of the province, but that it also rages at the heart of an organisation whose aim is to empower local women.

For some local women, the 'Pro-Choice' movement has

sustained personal empowerment...

'P' felt lonely and depressed at living in Sparwood, a small mining community near Cranbrook. What made her life unbearable, however, was the sudden death of her child. She says at this point she went into a deep depression. She gained weight and tried to kill herself. Eventually, she decided that she had to get appropriate, quality help and that this was not available in Sparwood. She went to Vancouver for group and individual therapy. She feels that undergoing the therapy saved her life. She found the therapy to be empowering and, as a result, feels that she knows herself better now. She has become vocal about the oppression that she feels from living in male dominated places such as Sparwood and Cranbrook. She is now a strong supporter of the 'Pro-Choice' movement. Because she feels that her philosophy is not entirely supported by those who operate the Women's Centre, she declines a nomination for one of the four directorship positions. She still comes to the Centre often, in order to keep in touch with those who do share her philosophy. She speaks excitedly and loudly, as if she feels that no one will listen, or would not hear her when she talks. She is afraid that others will feel that her opinions, her feelings, are not valid. She carries with her to the meeting at the Centre, recent magazine articles on the pro-choice movement and on the abortion pill. She speaks with me and says...

> "Now I know that you can't find your happiness from outside, it comes from within. You've got to do what you want. You've got to follow what you, yourself, believe in. I had to go through a pregnancy when I didn't want to. And I know that no woman would go through an abortion as a form of birth control. If they make abortion illegal

> again though, women will take to the coat hangers. And they'll die. If it were the men in this society who were the ones that bore children, there would be no questions. Pro-Choice would be the way it is. We mustn't let ourselves be dictated to. We must stand up for what we believe." (P.A. 401)

It is evident that through intense struggle to find a reason to live, 'P' believes that the goal of a good life is in striking a balance between caring for each other and caring for oneself. Finding these beliefs made her strong and now she searches for others to talk too about her beliefs in order to both grow from their thoughts and share her own. The Centre, although not completely supportive of her philosophy, is one place in town where she can go and share her thoughts without the fear of negative repurcussions. It is, then, an essential source for alleviating her isolation and in maintaining her empowerment.

For still other women, becoming involved with the Centre has proved to be empowering. 'A', a woman who recently ended a two year directorship position with the Centre, stated...

> "The Women's Centre has given me a lot. When I first came here four years ago, I was shy and quiet and there's no way I could've given the Director's report as I am here tonight. Now I'm not afraid to tell people what I think. My involvement with the Centre has given me so much in return for what I've given it." (A.D. 404)

It is obvious that, through her involvement with the Centre, 'A' has found a voice, one that she did not have before her involvement. For the past two years she has helped to write government grant proposals for Centre programs, she has organized many programs and events, she has talked to women about what they would like or need to be offered, and she has

represented the Centre at many women's meetings and conferences all across Canada. Through the experience, she has come to know herself and others better. Her consciousness of women's issues has been raised and she works to empower women. She, like many others, has been empowered and enlightened by her involvement with the Centre.

9.4 OVERCOMING PATRIARCHY

It is evident, from the voices of women, that many changes in the social and physical organisation of Cranbrook need to be made in order for women to reach a balance of self and other-centredness which is so important to their senses of well-being. As discussed in chapter eight, many forms of patriarchal oppression affect the social and physical organisation here, making it difficult, if not impossible, for many women to achieve their own senses of 'leisure'. Five general areas of patriarchal oppression were reported as being prevalent in Cranbrook. Each of these areas will now be addressed in terms of recommendations for alleviating the oppression which presently exists.

9.4.1. OVERCOMING PHYSICAL ISOLATION

Firstly, women reported the prevalence of physical isolation in town. Such factors as the abundance of single-family dwellings, the vast size of the East Kootenay area, the presence of mostly centralised shopping facilities and the absence of a public transportation system contribute to the isolation which many women feel. Although it would be foolish to suggest that Cranbrook's residential areas be converted from

single family dwellings to communal living arrangements, it would be beneficial for women to be more able to come intocontact with one another more frequently. The presence of more, small corner stores would increase the social contact possibilities in neighborhoods. As well, the presence of some form of public transportation system in town would alleviate the isolation felt from not owning a vehicle, as well as all of the mobility problems and day to day difficulties which are created by not being able to travel around.

9.4.2. GAINING ACCESS TO BETTER JOBS

Secondly, women voiced great dissatisfaction with the labour market organisation in town. It is generally felt that Cranbrook offers poor job opportunities for women. As well, it is felt that on the average, men hold more power in jobs than women here. Such comments by women as... 'We're both looking for work. I know that he'll find work, but I'm not so sure about me...' echoed the dominant position of males in the community. In order for women to gain access to better jobs in the community, they need the support of their families and government in receiving higher education, if it is required. For example, recent plans by the University of British Columbia in Vancouver were announced in which four-year degree programs would be offered at four community colleges in the province. Unfortunatly Cranbrook's college was not one of them. It then remains impossible for women to gain a University degree or some kinds of specialized training (for example in Nursing or Aeronautics) without leaving town. This is most certainly not

an option for most Cranbrook women. For many women, regardless of training, not receiving jobs is often a result of sexual or other forms of discrimination. In this case women, who havebeen affected by forms of discrimination in connection with the employment market need to come together, to contact the provincial human right's office, and generally to plan to pressure those agencies who discriminate on the basis of gender.

9.4.3 BREAKING DOWN STEREOTYPICAL VIEWS OF WOMEN

Thirdly, Cranbrook women often accept, or resist those who try to confront, stereotypical images of women. In this case, then, it is not only the attitudes of men that women find oppressive in their attempts to gain equal access to life chances and choices, it is also the attitudes of many women in town who support stereotypical and male-dominated images of women. It was difficult, if not impossible, for the women with whom I spoke (who found stereotypical images to be offensive) to publicly speak out against such things as the local bathing suit pageant, for fear of extremely negative repercussions and general lack of support. It is evident that this form of patriarchal oppression is deeply entrenched in the minds and actions of many community residents. Although some may condemn the harmful affects of a bathing suit pageant for its indecency, the same individuals would most likely support the ever popular sweetheart pageant. However, both events support and even ritualize stereotypical images of women. Again, in order to challenge stereotypical thought, women need to come together. At present, local women have not come together on this issue.

There is, however, one woman, who lives outside of town, who is a member of Media Watch. She occasionally writes in to the local papers in protest of advertising or other media which shefeels is degrading to women. The Women's Centre also contributes articles on a regular basis to the two local papers. Both papers were supportive of the contributed articles until the editor of one of the papers (a woman) left town. Since then, that paper will only occasionally print articles submitted by the Women's Centre. It is obvious that there is much work to be done in challenging stereotypical oppression of women in town and the first steps to combatting this oppression will begin with women coming together to discuss their feelings on the subject.

9.4.4. CONFRONTING SOCIAL ISOLATION

Fourthly, social isolation was commonly expressed by Cranbrook women. The Women's Centre is one organisation which actively promotes the coming together of women of all kinds. The Centre, based on feminist principles, is a place where friendships can be fostered and social isolation can be alleviated. The more women who support and promote the Centre and its various programs and causes and the continued growth of the Centre as an organisation, the more social isolation for women will be addressed and confronted. An extreme form of social isolation is physical violence against women of the community. Although there is no transition house for victims of violence, a safe home program has been set up. According to a local woman who runs the safe home program through the crisis

centre, this type of program is adequate for women. The program is, however, in need of money and could be improved with the help of more funds. The absence of a quality transition houseindicates denial on the part of community residents that violence against women here is as prevalent as it is and contributes to the isolation of abuse victims. A transition house, staffed by caring and supportive women would no doubt be an asset to the community.

9.4.5 PROMOTING FEMINIST COLLECTIVISM

Lastly, women in Cranbrook echoed the prominence and power of patriarchal organisations as opposed to the marginality of helping ones. In order for agencies such as the Women's Centre to gain much needed prominence, women must come together. They must be made aware of oppression which is so prevalent in Cranbrook. Many women are afraid to admit that they are oppressed. Many women only come to the Women's Centre when 'things are really bad, when there's absolutely no where else for them to turn...'. Women must begin to realize the value of the Centre and of coming together in order to increase the life choices and life chances of all women.

In view of the lack of adequate services available to women (the aged, the poor, the handicapped...), there is a need to increase funding to community organisations which provide services both by and for women. It is evident that, at present, negligible funds are allocated to these kinds of programs by local, or other, government which is run predominantly by white, male, middle-class, 'professionals'. Programs directed at

women's economic, educational, and emotional independence need to be offered as they are basically non-existent or, at best, only sporadically offered. They are not given the priority theydeserve.

> "Although community groups and other service organisations can do a lot to alleviate... women's isolation and dependence, ultimately, the initiative and impetus to gain full autonomy must come from... women themselves. We feel strongly that funding must be provided to... women themselves to establish resource centres controlled and operated by them, which would serve to provide a focal point of reference for... women at the local, provincial and national levels." (Djao and Ng, p. 155)

For example the Women's Centre is linked with a provincial and national women's organisation and is therefore governed by uniform standards. However, in the province of British Columbia, women from cities other than Vancouver and Victoria have consistent difficulties in creating linkages among themselves, given local conditions. Thus, although it is important that the Cranbrook Women's Centre maintain ties with provincial and national women's organisations, it is more important that it ensure its autonomy and local service. Djao and Ng (1987) state...

> "What we envisage are localized centres run by and for... women, which may eventually belong to a loosely knit network but which are autonomous. Their aim would be to provide a central point of reference for women in a particular locality so that they can define how they may wish to address their needs in that locality, and not to have to subordinate their needs to provincial and national priorities." (p. 155)

9.5 CONCLUSION

There is much work to be done in ensuring the well-being of

women in Cranbrook. Taking account of local differences in the treatment of women in a town such as Cranbrook (as opposed to other towns of similar or other circumstance) in collectiveaction represents the beginning of the empowerment of women here. In defining women's experiences here, a central point of focus, we have begun the process of addressing women's needs.

It is evident that terms such as feminism, self-development, oppression, patriarchy and leisure, need to further be explored in relation to Cranbrook women's lived experiences. Without discussion of everyday lives and without linking these experiences to larger, global issues of oppression and subordination, women will not be able to gain for themselves the things which they consider the 'goals of a good life.' Namely, they will not be able to reach a state of leisure or self-determination; the ability to feel effective and free along with feeling intense connections with others.

'N', a local art teacher, expresses the importance of reaching a state of leisure, a state of balance between self and other-centredness, in her own terms. Through teaching art to local women, she emphasizes the importance of women coming to know themselves and, having empowered themselves, giving to others. 'N' feels a great sense of satisfaction from knowing herself well and empowering others to do the same. She states...

> "Even if its a very simple painting, if it expresses your attitude to life, its a picture of your jar of preserves that you've made with love, to me that's valuable because its got something of the person in it... Please be true to yourself,

> respect yourself enough to teach yourself how to be creative, to get satisfaction and enjoyment and control... Painting is a means of communication. Develop yourself... look inside. I feel I've succeeded if I can help a woman open a door to herself. This is great!... This is what it's all about!...even if I can convince someone to be creative and choose their own scenery to paint. Please become in love with yourself..." (N.P. 57-59)

There is a sense, then, that what 'N' refers to as being 'what it's all about' is the improvement of the human condition. She sees social change as beginning with women developing themselves in the context of others.

What I have outlined above are merely some suggestions based on the accounts given to me by the women of Cranbrook. These recommendations on overcoming patriarchy in Cranbrook do not by any means constitute a definitive list. This thesis is a modest contribution to making visible some of the structural difficulties surrounding women's isolation and subordination. The impetus for change lies in women, all women, working in concert for short and long term gain.

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